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ABSTRACT

Articles in these two issues are as follows: "Imagination and Memory: Friends or Enemies" (Earl W. Stevick); "Imagination in Second Language Acquisition" (James J. Asher); "Where the Magic Lies" (Interview with Carolyn Graham); "Drawing on Experience: The Interview" (with John Dumicich); "What Color is Your Picnic Basket?" (Interview with Susan Litt); "Humor in the Classroom" (M. Jerry Weiss); "Imagination Really Means Freedom" (Interview with Dominic Pietrosimone); "Reading Aloud: Children's Literature in College ESL Classes" (Denise C. Lagos and Susan C. Khodabakhshi); "The Right to Be Creative" (Interview with Walter Eliason); "The Puppet as a Metaphor" (Tova Ackerman); "Drawing on Experience: The Article" (Christine B. Root); "Using the Sunday Comics on Monday" (JoAnn Hoppe); "Humanistic Imagination: Soul Food for the Language Class" (Gertrude Moskowitz); "The Deep Water had Deeper Fishes: On Creating a Language of the Imagination with Children" (Richard Lewis); "Telling Tales in School: Using Myths in the ESL Classroom" (Jean McConochie); "Whole Brain Learning and Relaxation Techniques" (Maraleen Manos-Jones); "Storytelling: A Way of Freeing the Imagination. An Interview with Dvora Shurman" (Tova Ackerman); "Story Tails" (John Dumicich and Christine B. Root); "(Reading for Pleasure" Short Novels in Academic University ESL Programs" (Christine F. Meloni); "Rock Poetry: The Literature Our Students Listen To" (Claudia Ferradas Moi); "Gala Night: Experiencing English Beyond the Classroom" (Gilberto Diaz Santos); "Daydreams and Nightmares: The Need for the Imagination in Student Writing" (Steven Haber); "The Role of Art in Language Learning" (Catriona R. Moore, Judith A. Koller, and Maria Kreie Arago); "ESL Community Puppeteers" (Margaret Canepa); "Using Songs to Introduce Poetry to ESL Students" (Loretta Frances Kasper); "Stimulating Imagination Outside the Classroom" (Stephen A. Sadow); "Teaching English Through Broadway Musicals" (Gina Milano); "Beyond MTV: Music Videos as Foreign Language Text" (Thomas J. Garza); "Country Songs: Music, Language, and Life" (Judith Diamond and Elizabeth Minicz); and "Review of 'A Chorus of Cultures'" (Susan Rupp). (NAV)

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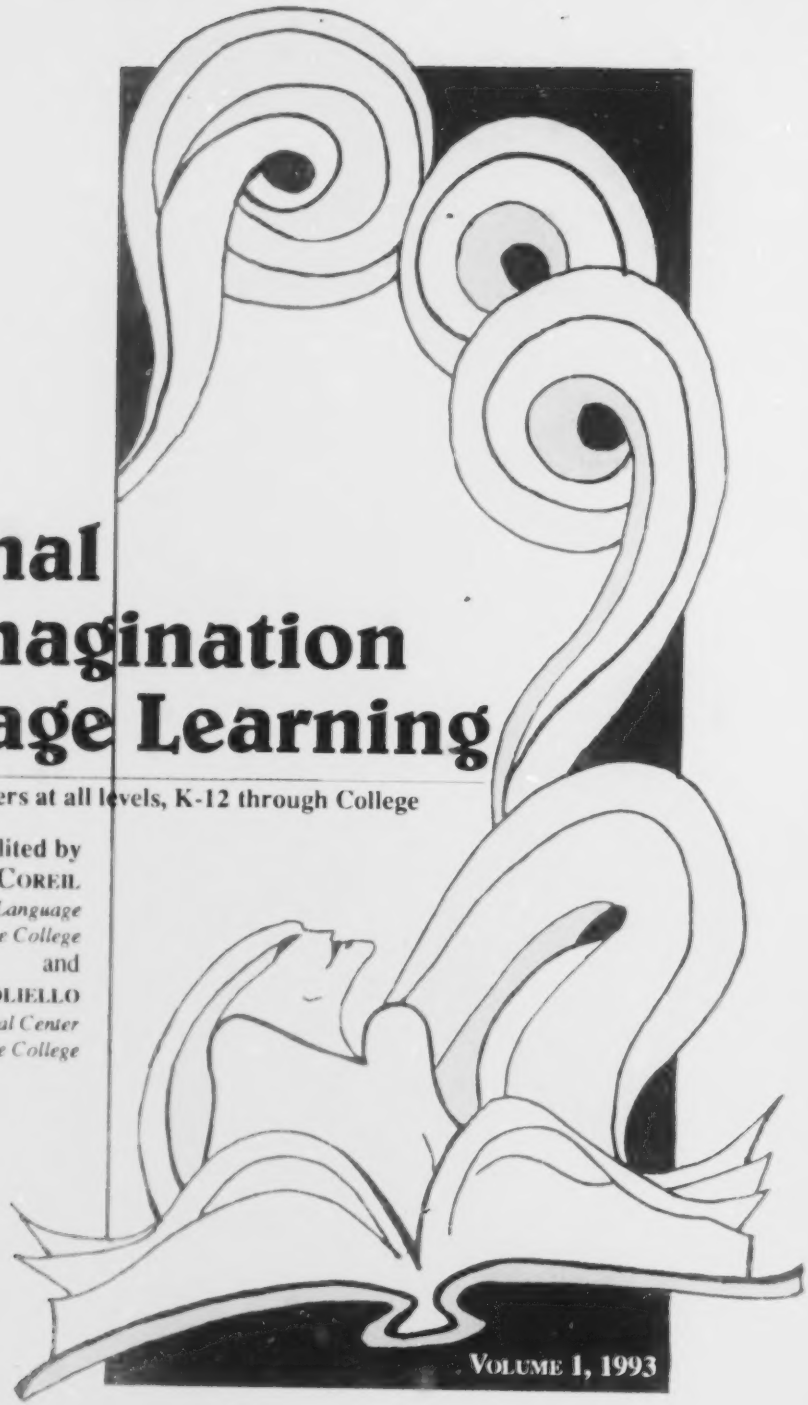
The Journal Of The Imagination In Language Learning



A publication for language teachers at all levels, K-12 through College

Edited by
CLYDE COREIL
Program in English as a Second Language
Jersey City State College
and
MIHRI NAPOLIELLO
Multicultural Center
Jersey City State College

VOLUME 1, 1993

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The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning is published in conjunction with "The Annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Second Language Acquisition" at Jersey City State College. Although the sessions at that Conference take up related issues, the Journal selects and publishes articles independently of the Conference.

This publication is concerned with the following proposition: Attempts to acquire a language are significantly enhanced by the presence of an activated imagination. Both theoretical and practical articles or proposals for articles that are related to this broad area are welcome and should be addressed to either of the editors at The Journal of the Imagination, 347 Grossnickle Hall, Jersey City State College, 2039 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey 07305-1597.

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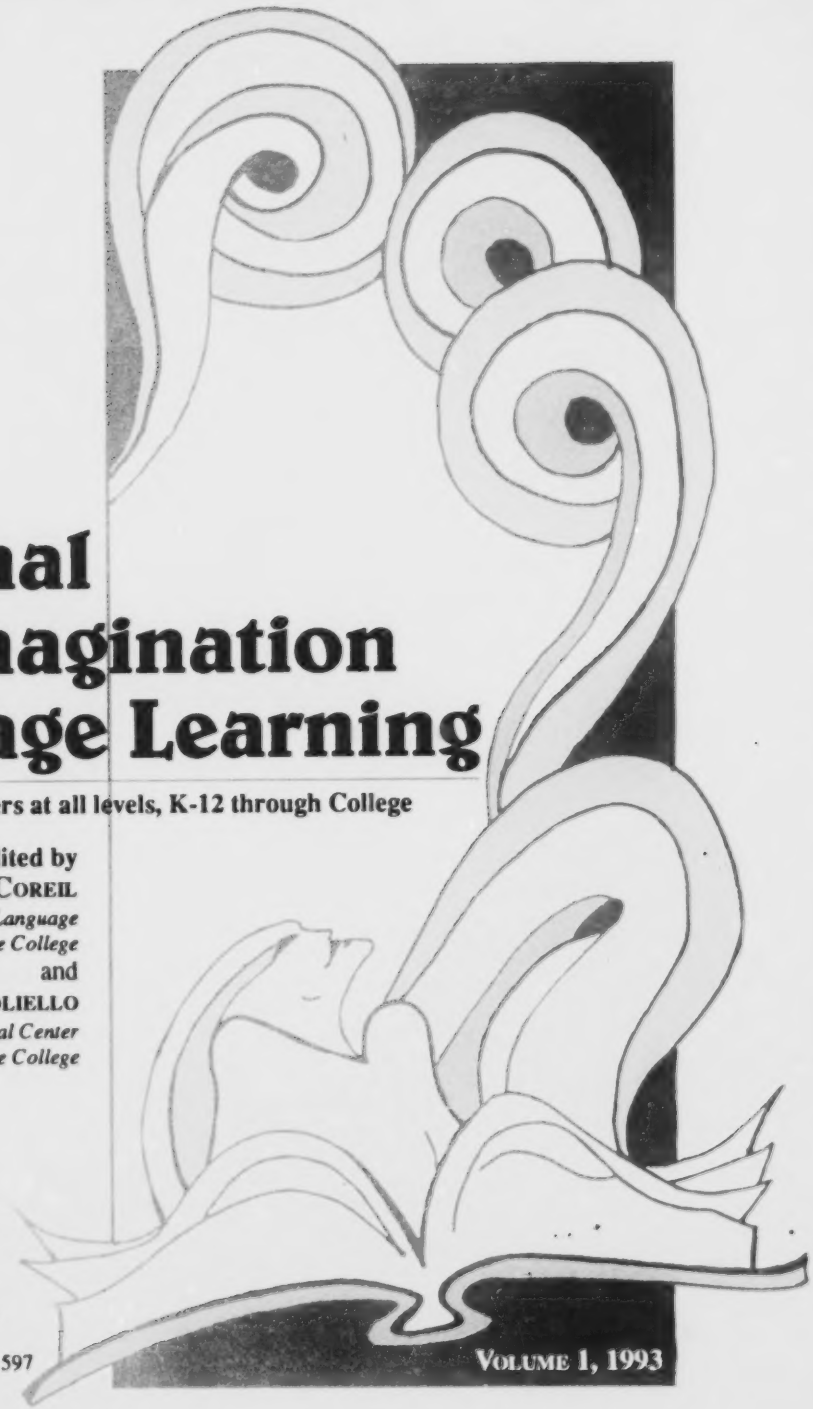

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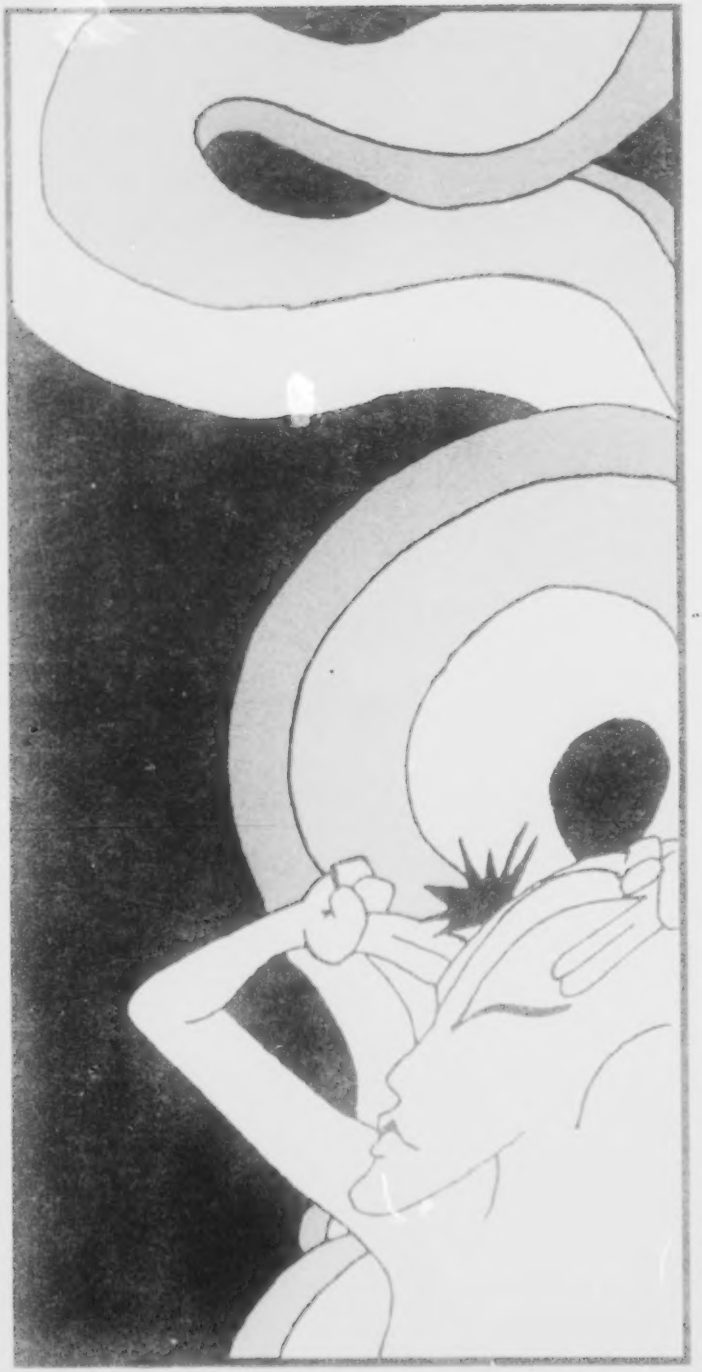

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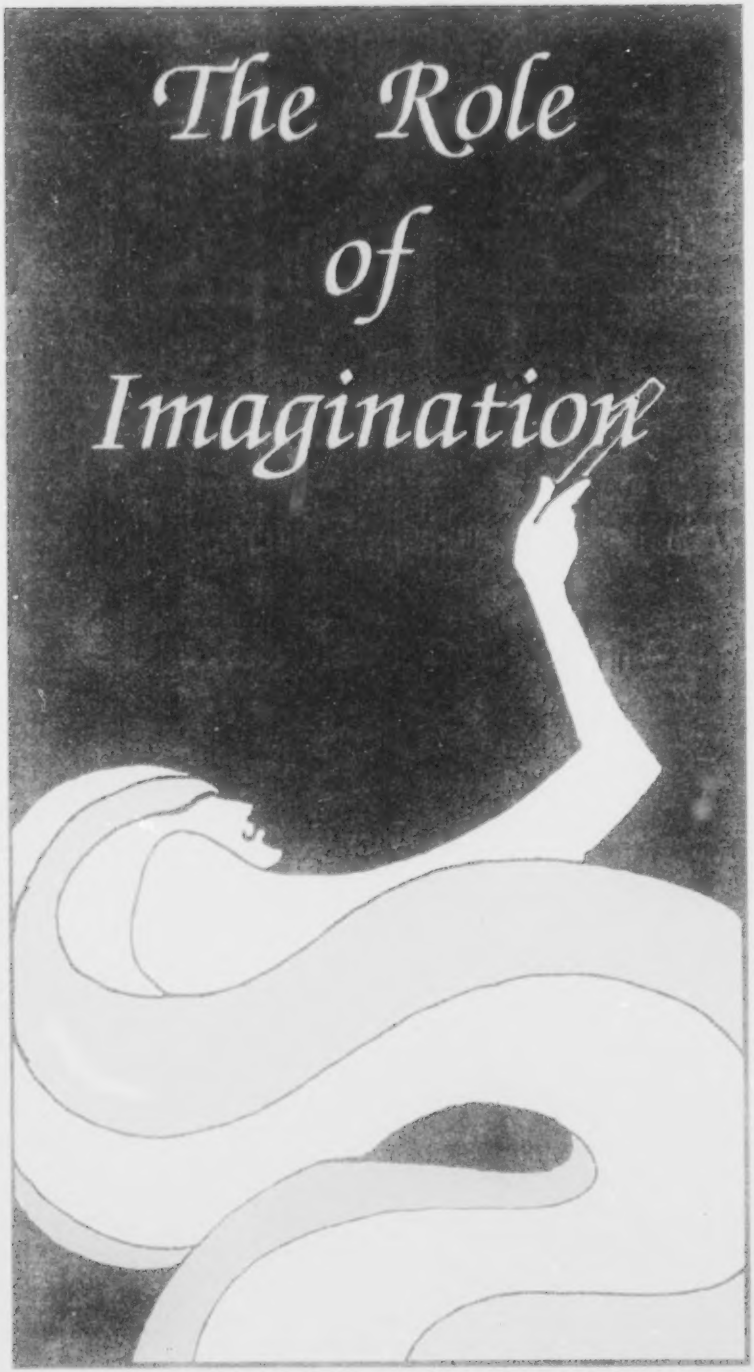
NOTE: **All interviews in this issue were conducted by co-editor Clyde Corell, identified as "JILL," (*Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*).**

The Role of Imagination



Introduction

It is certainly not very encouraging to find a new journal that, on the one hand, claims to be meeting an unmet need, and on the other, admits that it has only a foggy notion of what that need is and how it should be addressed. However, when coupled with a firm conviction and commitment, that very deficiency can become a strong reason for being. Although we set only the broadest of parameters on the mental faculty referred to as "the imagination," we are convinced that it is probably the single most potent and effective force in driving the process of language acquisition.

What this publication will serve as is a forum for arguments directly or indirectly related to the following hypothesis: Attempts to acquire a language are greatly enhanced when they occur in the presence of an activated imagination. Although we acknowledge bias toward supporting evidence, we welcome the opposite both in search of the truth and as the slate on which we can whet our argument.

The articles we are looking for will address either of two broad topics. The first includes techniques of teaching language that call on the imagination. Often, these will deal with the arts—including but not limited to painting, drawing, doodling, sculpting, instrumental music, drumming, dancing, singing, humming, fiction, poetry, and drama. We certainly are interested in approaches to comic books, jokes, cartoons, printed advertisements, dramatized commercials, soap operas, greeting cards, slogans, and whatever else you might have a handle on. Each of these forms can be used to stimulate the imagination and create an excellent situation for the internalization of one or more specific elements of language.

The second type of article will involve more theoretical attempts to relate language learning to the imagination. It is somewhat unlikely that anyone would submit a piece that presents highly technical psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic research related to the imagination. If, however, they should, our parameters are certainly broad enough to accomodate them. We are also quite interested in straightforward reports summarizing this kind of research and/or suggesting implications for the teaching of language. If you have something in mind, do let us hear about it.

Flying Kites

If you think that any of this might appeal to you or if you find yourself the least bit interested in this first issue, consider it your forum. We invite you to use its pages to write letters about published articles, to answer challenges, to tell us that we'd be better off flying kites. In keeping with this thrust, we have tried to keep the price of the Journal within reason. Persons living abroad who have difficulty arranging payment should write to us. At present, we intend to publish one issue per year.

An Annual Conference

The Journal grew out of the "Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Second Language Acquisition" organized in 1990 and held each spring (usually late April) at Jersey City State College in New Jersey. In addition to a keynote, we have twelve, 90-minute workshops. Past plenary speakers are James J. Asher, developer of TPR; Carolyn Graham, author of Jazz Chants; and Gary Gabriel and Donald R.H. Byrd, well known authors and educators.

Presentations generally address the same sort of issues as do Journal articles. For example, typical workshops are "ESL through Broadway Musicals," "Creative Movement and Language Learning," and "Drawing in the Teaching of Language." Attendance at the one-day meeting ranges between 300 and 400 teachers of ESL and bilingual education at all levels—Kindergarten through College. Both the Journal and the Conference are made possible by the support of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Multicultural Center, and the ESL Program at the College.

Interviews

Five of the articles in this issue are interviews. We find that the heat of conversation often serves to

bring ideas together in a fresh, unrehearsed manner that is not possible in formal articles. We would like to call attention to several pointed issues that arose in the interviews. The first is that language teaching that does not call on the imagination often tends to be dull and ineffective. There is probably nothing that can be done in the classroom that does not, in some way, involve the imagination. The important point here seems to concern the extent of that involvement. The second issue is that it is far more socially acceptable to appeal to the imagination of younger children than to students in their later teens and older. At these "higher" levels, it seems that we are particularly inclined to let ourselves be wrapped in old constraints and petrified codes of what is and what is not appropriate in the classroom. The third, rather closely related issue is the possible bias of school administrators toward "pencil-pushing" exercises and their distrust of methods that call on the imagination. These three issues would seem to constitute an "Interesting Cause" for this Journal—that is, to bring attention to the frequently encountered, shameful neglect of the imagination in our pedagogy and in our schools and colleges. We would appreciate hearing from you on this one.

Again, welcome aboard.

Clyde Coreil
Mihri Napoliello

Imagination and Memory: Friends or Enemies?

by Earl W. Stevick

Dr. Earl W. Stevick is well known and respected around the world as one of the most prolific and influential writers on the theory and practice of language teaching. His books include Teaching and Learning Languages; Images and Options in the Language Classroom; A Way and Ways; Memory, Meaning and Method; Humanism in Language Teaching; *and* Success with Foreign Languages.

Imagination: The Power to Create

To 'imagine', in plain Anglo-Saxon words, is nothing but putting together in our heads something that was not to be found in what our eyes saw or in what our ears heard. Or, in the words of the dictionary our kids used in school, 'imagination' is 'the power of forming in the mind pictures of things not present to the senses'; it is 'the ability to *create* new things or ideas, or to combine old ones in new forms'. The power to form. The power to create!

In the very first verse of the very first chapter of the Book of Genesis, we read that "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth." That certainly must have taken a lot of power. Power, yes. But it also took imagination—an unimaginable amount of imagination, in fact.

And now here we are. We alone of all species have that divine spark, the gift of imagination. This gift of imagination is a powerful gift—it's a powerful tool. We use our imagination to create our own little universes. We sometimes use it to create bad things, and even when we create something good, we tend to worship the work of our hands—the product of our own imaginations, and even to worship ourselves as creators. Today, then, let's explore this gift in the hope that by understanding it more clearly we may come to use it more respectfully and more constructively—even more imaginatively.

Really what I am going to do today is simply tell you a series of stories, and I assure you that all of these stories will be true. Then we'll see what we can learn from each of these stories about this thing called 'imagination'—this power to create with the mind.

Two Types of Imagination

Let me begin by telling you two stories in which I think we would all agree imagination is at work. I'll tell you the stories, and then we'll see if we can pick out a fundamental difference—a deep unlikeness—between them.

First is the story of an experiment—an experiment that was reported in 1983 by two cognitive psychologists whose names were Dickel and Slak (Dickel and Slak 1983). Dickel and Slak, as cognitive psychologists are wont to do, sat their subjects down in front of a screen, and onto the screen they projected pairs of English nouns, and these were all nouns that had high imagery value. The task of the subjects was to somehow connect the nouns of each pair together in their minds. In order to help them do this, half of the subjects were given descriptions of images—images made up by someone else—images that connected the two nouns. The other half of the subjects were not given this help. Instead, they were told to make up their own images to connect the two nouns in a pair. Of course in the terms that you and I are interested in today, we'd say that this second group of subjects were being asked to exercise their imagination: to form or create something—an image—that wasn't found on the screen that they'd been watching. That was the presentation part of the experiment.

In the testing part of the experiment, the subjects were given one noun from each pair, and were asked to supply the other noun that had been presented with it. And sure enough, as you and I and all right-thinking imagination enthusiasts would have predicted, the subjects in the second group—the ones who had made up their own images—performed significantly better.

Editor's Note: This is the written part of the keynote address that Dr. Stevick prepared for the Fourth Annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Second Language Acquisition held at Jersey City State College on April 23, 1993. Although Dr. Stevick was unable to attend the Conference, he did give the Journal permission to print this text, for which we are indeed grateful.

And now for my second story, which I'll call 'The Secretary's Illusion'. Many years ago now—so long ago that I could almost start this story with 'Once upon a time'—I came back from lunch and found a message slip on my desk. It said I was to call a 'Mr. Flaggenheisch' at the Center for Applied Linguistics. Now, it so happened that I didn't know any Mr. Flaggenheisch, either at the Center for Applied Linguistics or anywhere else. So I thought for a minute, then phoned Irwin Feigenbaum at the Center for Applied Linguistics, and he thanked me for returning his call. I asked the secretary how much time had elapsed between Irwin's phone call and the time when she wrote out the message slip. She assured me she had filled out the slip immediately, and she seemed quite confident that she had it right.

Now what had happened? The way I interpret this incident, the secretary's mind had retained some features of the name, but had lost other features. Some of the features that she did hold onto were of course the first consonant, the number of syllables, the whole middle syllable, and the fact that the name was 'German-sounding'. In order to fill in the gaps between these retained features, her mind had somehow supplied the missing vowels and consonants. It had, in the words of the dictionary's first definition, 'formed' something that had not been 'present to the senses'. So this, too, was an instance of 'imagination'.

And yet I don't have to tell you that these two kinds of 'imagination' are drastically unlike each other. Just for convenient reference, let's give them labels. The imagination that the second group of subjects had to exercise in the Dickel and Slak experiment let's call 'Type W imagination', and the type that my secretary showed in filling out the message slip let's call 'Type F imagination'.

Now let's just list some of the ways in which Types W and F of imagination differ. Most obviously, I suppose, Type F imagination (what happened in the secretary's mind) is blindingly fast. In the incident I've been telling you about, it was so fast that she wasn't even aware of it. Type W imagination, on the other hand (what the second group of subjects did in the Dickel and Slak experiment), takes a noticeable amount of time: in fact, Dickel and Slak allowed these subjects 10 whole seconds for each image they had to construct.

A second difference between Type W and Type F imagination has to do with control. What was created in the experiment (Type W) was created deliberately. One might almost say it was contrived. The other type of product—the missing vowels and consonants for 'Flaggenheisch'—were not under conscious control.

And there's a third difference: the role of competition. In the Dickel and Slak experiment, if the subjects had had something else on their minds—if they had been engaged in some concurrent task, or if they had been apprehensive about something, for example—under these circumstances they would either have been unable to form satisfactory images at all, or at the very least they would have required more time for the process. From this, we can conclude that there seem to be limited resources available for use in Type W 'forming and creating'—in Type W 'imagining'. On the other hand, there is no evidence that Type F imagining draws on any comparably limited capacity.

Two Views of 'Memory'

Now, I'm sure that these three differences between contrasting kinds of imagination—these differences with regard to speed, with regard to consciousness, and with regard to capacity—I'm sure that these three differences will put many of you in mind of another contrast that's being talked about from time to time these days. That's a contrast among various 'kinds' of what for some reason are all lumped together and called 'memory'. And that's no coincidence, either, because as I'm going to try to show you, there's an intimate interrelationship between memory (what we *have in* our minds from before)—and imagination (what we *create with* our minds).

I've been interested in this subject of 'memory' for several years now. 'Memory' is a subject that I think too many people, including me, have too often been too ready to be a little too glib about. In particular, I'm fairly sure we need to replace the commonly-quoted two-way contrast between 'short-term memory' (STM) and 'long-term memory' (LTM) (Klatzky 1984).

The view of memory that's implied in much that's written and said about language teaching these days is something like what we see in Diagram A.

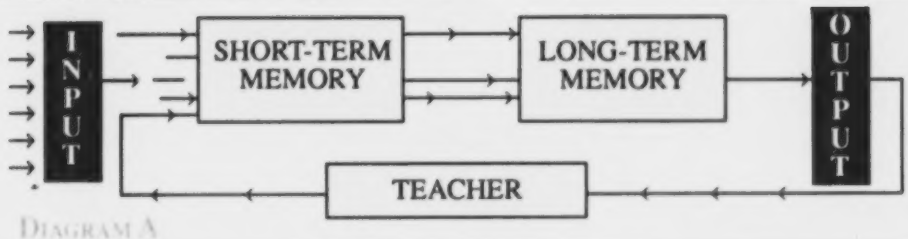


DIAGRAM A

In the context of language study, what Diagram A says is that a student is exposed to a large amount of variegated input; that some—but only some—of this input gets into short-term memory (STM); that some but only some of what is in STM is then stored in long-term memory (LTM); and that when output is needed, it is drawn from whatever finally wound up in LTM. In ordinary, non-imaginative teaching, as I read the diagram, the teacher hears the student's output and realizes that something is amiss in their LTM. She (the teacher) therefore provides new input, which eventually reaches the student's LTM and modifies it. This process continues in one way or another until the student's output shows that the modification was indeed the one the teacher had hoped for. So Diagram A fits conventional teaching very neatly.

Now let me just draw your attention to three features of Diagram A. The first is that in Diagram A, STM and LTM are really treated as two stages—almost as two places—to which and through which information passes. The second feature to notice is that information passes to and through these stages in a kind of unidirectional flow: from the senses to STM; through STM to LTM; from LTM to output. Third, and from our point of view today worst, information in this view is just a commodity, it's just a cargo to be moved. It's not a creation. There is no place in Diagram A for imagination.

Now I'd like to take just a few minutes to sketch for you what I believe to be a more up-to-date picture of what keeps getting called 'memory'. Let's move from the older view of memory to the alternative view one step at a time.

The first step is to replace STM with something that cognitive scientists like to call 'working memory' (WM). With your permission, however, I'd like to replace that term with a more colorful, more metaphoric term, and talk instead about 'the Worktable' (WT). And I'm not doing this just because I like metaphors, either. As we well know, metaphors are tricky, but at least this metaphor is out in the open. I believe that the terms STM and LTM are worse than metaphors: They are Nominalized Reifications (which is my polysyllabic and learned-sounding way of saying that they obscure complexity by giving it a name), and nominalized reifications are even more treacherous than metaphors are. And for the same reason, I'd like to introduce a second metaphor, and instead of talking about 'LTM', I'd like to talk about 'the Files' (F).

There are three differences between these terms STM and the WT. One difference is that STM was a stage. The WT, on the other hand, is really not a *stage*, but a *state*—a biologically describable state. A second difference is that with STM, we were mainly interested in what *passes through* it. With the WT, we are mainly concerned with what *happens on* it. Third, the very name 'short-term' memory focuses on limited *duration*. With the WT, we are more interested in its limited *capacity*—in the fact that only a relatively small amount of information can be in the WT-state at any one time (Klatzky 1984).

The second step in going from the well-known view of memory to the alternative view is to see the F not as a place where information just sits on some kind of shelf waiting to be retrieved. Rather, information is stored in dynamic networks. And by 'dynamic' I mean that if some part or parts of one of these networks receives activation, whether from the senses or from the WT, then that activation spreads, rapidly and automatically and pretty much outside of conscious control, throughout the whole network (Bryant 1990).

The third step is to change how we think of traffic between the WT and the F. In the familiar view, as I said, that traffic was one-way. In the alternative view, it's definitely two-way traffic. Basically, something that's on the WT at a given moment somehow activates related items in the F. The activation of

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those items spreads, activating new configurations within the F. This activation within the F may reach a level that allows what has been activated to somehow register back on the WT—thus giving a kind of response from the F to what is on the WT.

This brings us to the fourth step, which is to notice that what's on the WT comes not only from the senses, as in the usual view of STM, but also from the F. This means that all of the items of information that come from the senses, and all of the items that come from the F, are competing with one another for the limited capacity of the WT. (This may be another way of saying part of what has been meant by the unfortunate term 'affective filter'.)

Fifth is a step which is very well supported in the literature of cognitive research, but which is seldom mentioned in writing about language teaching. That is that the same item from WM may within the F set off/trigger/receive back two or more separate responses from the F to WM. These responses usually agree with one another, but they don't always (Roeltgen and Stadler 1985; Bradley and Thomson 1984; Bub and Kertesz 1982).

Sixth, we need to sharpen our view of what happens on the WT. Three things are particularly important there. First of all, on the WT we can *notice* things consciously. Second, once two or more things that are on the WT at the same time have been noticed, we can *compare* them. And third, once we have compared things, we can consciously *manipulate* or rearrange or evaluate the results of these comparisons. Notice, compare, manipulate. And the results of this noticing, comparing, and manipulating on the WT can then modify the connections among the items that make up the networks back in the F.

Seventh, last, and very important to the way I'm guessing memory works, is the place of purpose and the place of emotion. What we call a 'memory' contains many kinds of information—most obviously, visual and auditory information, and the information from the rest of the so-called 'five senses'. But a 'memory' also contains information about time (remoteness and duration), and about the purposes we had in connection with the experience, and about the emotions that went along with the experience. A few writers believe that 'memories' are in fact organized not around their sensory elements, but around their purposive or emotional elements, or some combination of the two. I'm betting that those writers are correct in this belief.

I've tried to represent this alternative view of memory by Diagram B, but of course it's actually not possible to portray 'states' in terms of black and white rectangles on a two-dimensional surface.

Now let's go back and look at the two kinds of imagining—at Type F imagination and Type W imagi-

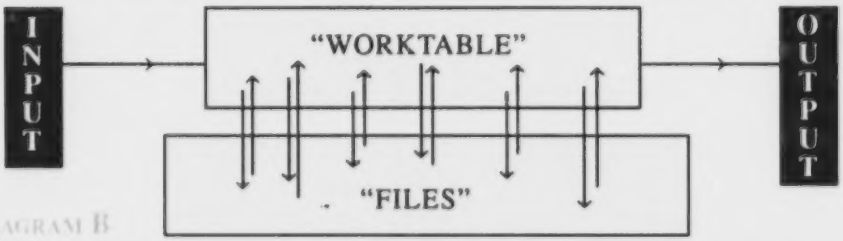

DIAGRAM B

nation. Type F imagination—the type that we saw in the Flaggenheisch incident—takes place almost entirely in the F. The audible stimulus 'Feigenbaum' came in over the phone, parts of it were apparently lost, and the rest may have in fact been momentarily on the WT, but the parts that were not lost immediately activated a set of networks in the F, and the outcome of that spreading activation was the placing of the spurious name 'Flaggenheisch' on the secretary's WT. That, of course, is why I chose to call this type of imagination 'Type F': not from 'Flaggenheisch', but because it mainly makes use of the F, and makes minimal use of the WT.

And so of course the name of the other type of imagination, 'Type W,' is named for the WT. But Type W imagination is not just the mirror image of Type F. That is to say, it does make use of the WT, but the F

are equally important to its functioning. In the Dickel and Slak experiment, for example, let's suppose that one pair of words were 'house' and 'bird'. Let's take a look at the probable sequence of events in the mind of a member of the second group of subjects in the experiment:

1. The printed form of the first word comes in through the eyes.
2. In the F, this printed form activates the corresponding spoken form.
3. At the same time, also in the F, the printed form may activate meanings and experiences that have been associated with the printed form in the past. Now we see how important the F are even for imagination of Type W.
4. The spoken form (Step 2) also activates meanings and experiences from the past. [Some of these meanings and experiences will be the same as in the step 3, but some may not be the same.]
5. Steps 1-4 also take place for the second word.
6. Next, back on the WT, the meanings and experiences from the first word and those from the second word are noticed and compared. There may be quite a few combinations of these: The familiar audio form 'bird house'. A picture of a bird house. A bird perched on the gable of a house. Or even the bizarre image of a bird, with hammer and nails, building a house.
7. Still on the WT, the subject of the experiment selects one of the combinations and sends it back to the F.

So this gives you some idea of why I said that Type W imagination involves not only the WT itself, but also an intimate interaction between the (conscious) WT and the (largely non-conscious) F.

A Cast of Characters

Well, that's the end of the little theoretical sketch that I wanted to share with you. Now let's turn to what I consider the fun part—looking for imagination in some real human beings. These are people with whom I once had a chance to do hour-long taped interviews about their experiences in learning languages (Stevick 1989). Seven of these people had been remarkably successful, although in a fascinating variety of ways. The rest were people about whose success or lack of success I had no information.

Just to establish a baseline, let's look first at Eugene, who I suspect was one of the less successful among the 17 learners that I interviewed. Listen to what Eugene told me about his study of vocabulary:

> "When I have to memorize something," he said, " I just do it over and over. I listen to the tapes over and over, and then I write it out so that I'll know it. Later I test myself to see if I can reproduce it cold, first in writing and then orally."

Now, what kind or kinds of imagination do we find in Eugene's report? I don't know about you, but it seems to me that this is about as unimaginative a way of study as one can conveniently imagine. Our definition, remember, said something about forming in the mind pictures of things or ideas, or combining old things and ideas in new forms. None of that here, is there? Eugene takes in what the textbook has provided to his senses, and he simply duplicates that input.

Does this unimaginative sort of study get things into LTM, or into the F? Yes, of course it does. We know in fact that this is how most students have successfully prepared for 'tomorrow's vocabulary quiz' for centuries. But we also know all too well the limitations of this kind of studying, don't we? We know that if we try to learn very many things in this way together, they're likely to get mixed up and mismatched in our minds. We also know that material learned without imagination is here today, all right, here for today's quiz, but that it's gone tomorrow or the next day. It certainly lasts longer than the 20-second span of STM, so in a sense it must have been 'in LTM'. But I'd like to say that some things in LTM are in *relatively* temporary 'long-term' memory (TM), while others are in *relatively* permanent memory (PM). In terms of my sketch, I'd say that the networks that are responsible for items and associations learned in this way are relatively simple networks, and that they are particularly lacking in distinctive elements of purpose or of emotion or both. So let's not hear any more about Eugene. An unimaginative guy like him doesn't even really belong at a meeting like this one, does he? But he does leave us with one distinction to keep in mind. *DISTINCTION: Between TM and PM.*

As our next step, let's take a quick look at Aileen, another of the interviewees about whose overall success I have no information. Aileen told me that when she hears unfamiliar sounds, sounds that she doesn't understand, whether they're speech sounds or animal sounds, she gets a corresponding visual pattern in her mind, lines that go up and down, smooth or jagged, like what one would see on an oscilloscope. This is actually an example of a fairly rare but well-documented phenomenon called 'synesthesia'—the representation in one sense of a stimulus that came in through another sense. My reason for mentioning it now is that it reminds us quite vividly of the fact that, once activation has been initiated in our students' F, those files can come up with a wide variety of responses which they send back to the WT. The imagination in what Aileen has told us—the filling in of what was not present in the senses—was automatic, it was very fast, and it took place within the F. And that's all I want to say about Aileen. *DISTINCTION: Between no creation (Eugene) and creation (Aileen).*

Next is Fred. I don't know about Fred's overall success either, but he illustrates what in language-teaching circles these days is being called 'mnemonics' (Dickel 1983, Wall and Routowicz 1987), or 'the Keyword Method' (Atkinson 1975). As Fred put it:

> "When I want to learn a new word, I like to have a logical reason why it means what it means. If I can't find a logical reason, which I usually can't, then I'll create a story, or a picture or something, that connects the words and its meaning for me."

This is of course pretty much what the second group of subjects were doing in the Dickel and Slak experiment that I was telling you about. People working this way first notice on the WT what it is that they want to connect together. Then they query the F and, as we've just seen with Aileen, the F send back one or more responses to each of the queries. Then the person notices what's now on the WT, compares, creatively rearranges, or whatever, and sends the new combination back to the F. Now, of course, we're dealing with Type–W imagination—something far beyond what Eugene was doing with his repetitions. But because the mnemonics are basically arbitrary and isolated, and because they all share pretty much the same, academic purpose, most of the results are still likely to be in TM rather than in PM. *DISTINCTION: Between non-conscious creation (Aileen) and conscious creation (Fred).*

Now, for a change, we come to one of the highly talented and successful learners. This is a young woman named Frieda. With regard to her approach to vocabulary learning, Frieda was quite different from Eugene, and even from Fred. As Frieda saw it, it's best to use the new words. But, she said, in class even in small group work, you just don't get a chance to use all of the new words. "So," she said, "this is something you have to work out for yourself, *in your own mind*. I either find an occasion, talking to people, or I imagine to myself, that I do have an occasion to say it. If you don't have anybody to speak to, you can speak to yourself!"

This is of course another instance of Type-W memory, and in this respect it's similar to what we just heard from Fred. But I'd like to suggest to you that there's also a difference between Frieda and Fred—and this is a difference that's of interest to us as language teachers. The difference is this: In Fred's case, what he brought back from the F to the WT—what he tied the new information into—was arbitrary and isolated, and the networks into which the new information was integrated were relatively simple, and those networks were lacking in material that had to do very strongly or distinctively with emotions or with purposes. But some researchers believe that it's precisely these items of emotion and of purpose that memories are organized around. By contast, what Frieda did in her mind did bring in at least mental versions of situations that were fully developed, and that included items of purpose and emotion. So my guess is that the result of what Frieda did wound up farther along the continuum from TM to PM than was true of what Fred did. *DISTINCTION: Between tying new items of information to isolated old items (Fred), and tying them to situations (Frieda).*

This reminds me of an incident that the late Bob Di Pietro told about in the beginning of his book *Strategic Interaction* (Di Pietro 1987). This involved a friend of his who, being in Cairo with very meager control of the Arabic language, had been faced by a plumbing emergency which she handled by somehow piecing together an Arabic sentence that meant "There's water on the bathroom floor!" Not only did

she come up with the sentence for the occasion, but she could still remember it 20 years later. "There is no doubt," Di Pietro concluded, "that her success in communicating with the desk clerk helped to fix the utterance forever in her mind" (3). So I would further guess that the times when Frieda actually talked with people in the real world produced more permanence than her imaginary encounters did. *DISTINCTION: Between imagined happenings (Frieda sometimes) and things that really happened (Bob Di Pietro's friend).*

As a matter of fact, Frieda and I talked at some length about this gap between imagined and real use. We talked about what we called the 'shelf life' of memories that she put into the TM end of the F via imagined use. How long did she think something could stay in TM and still be available for real use when the situation for it finally arrived? Her guess was maybe a week or two, and that guess makes sense to me, although I'm sure it varies greatly according to a number of factors. She and I came up with a little term that I still like: 'stockpiling'. 'Stockpiling' is simply a name for the strategy of systematically, by one means or another, putting new items into TM with the idea that some of them, though not all of them, before they are lost from TM, will get worked into PM.

So far, the examples I've given you have mainly had to do with imagination in the learning of vocabulary. But as we all know, there's a lot more to a new language than its words. Another of the perennial bugbears of language students is the need to master the use of 'the endings'—the inflected forms of the nouns and verbs and so forth that we find in many languages.

An interesting story about learning 'the endings' comes from Derek. Derek was another of the highly successful learner-users that I interviewed. At the time I talked with him, Derek was in the middle of learning Finnish, which is a language with very complicated paradigms both for nouns and for verbs. Derek claimed to have derived great benefit from writing the paradigms out numerous times, not just copying them mechanically, but trying to arrange them in more and more economical, more and more systematic, and more and more illuminating ways. Once he was satisfied with a formulation, Derek put the paradigm aside and seldom or never looked at it again.

Surely, you may say, Derek was going to an extreme in copying, following, and reproducing exactly what had been given to him. And we've said that by definition 'imagination' has to involve creation of what was not there before. So, you may well ask, how does imagination enter in here?

The answer, of course, is that what was created—what was not there before—was not meaning-pictures as it was with Fred and Frieda, and it wasn't word-forms as it was in the Flaggenheisch incident. Rather, it was order—it was perceived relationships—it was relationships perceived among the dozens or even perhaps the hundreds of forms of a Finnish noun or verb.

If we're to move ahead to the next step in understanding how memory and imagination work, though, we really need to take a very close look at what may be happening between the WT and the F in what Derek is doing. Here's a tentative and probably very incomplete list:

1. Notice one of the forms.
2. Notice another form.
3. Compare these forms and notice the relationship between them. *Describe* those relationships (probably to oneself), verbally or nonverbally.
4. Put products of 1-3 into TM.
5. Repeat 1-4 for others pairs of forms.
6. Compare the relationships that were noticed in the above steps, and notice relationships *among* those relationships.
7. Repeat the preceding steps indefinitely, while *deciding* what to notice next, and what to compare next.

If we look just at the verbs in these seven steps, which of these verbs are pretty much just receptive and non-imaginative, and which ones require creation and imagination? It seems to me that noticing and comparing and putting and repeating are generally pretty routine and non-imaginative. On the other hand, describing and deciding require personal involvement and imagination because they involve supplying something that wasn't present in the data. *DISTINCTION: Between remembering things (meanings or*

forms or whatever) and remembering relationships among them. A MORE GENERAL DISTINCTION: Between more-abstract and less-abstract things that we remember or supply.

The next person I'd like to introduce to you is Ann. She was another of the superior adult language learners. Ann was studying Norwegian. During our interview, Ann told me about a conversation that she'd once overheard between two speakers of Norwegian—and this was after she had just a few dozen hours of instruction in the language. Amazingly, Ann reported that she had been able to get virtually all of the meaning form the Norwegian conversation, and this report of hers was confirmed by her supervisor, who was sitting in on the interview. Which of our two types of imagination does this sound like?

One guess is that Ann's imagination here was of the F-type. That is, the incoming information passed over the WT, but then whatever words she had already learned (plus, probably, a few international words) immediately generated meanings in Ann's F. Next, without consulting the WT, Ann's F filled in whatever gaps of meaning were caused by words she didn't know. And finally, the total filled-in picture then registered back on Ann's WT, and she (as we say) "understood" the conversation. She was moving from what a minute ago I called smaller, less-abstract units, and toward larger, more-abstract units. This of course reminds us of what these days is called "bottom-to-top processing".

Another guess might be that while Ann was listening to the Norwegian conversation, she was getting back to her WT some parts of the meaning of the conversation, and that she noticed both the meanings and the gaps in meaning, and that she then looked on the WT for additional information about the smaller things that had were still on the WT, and built things up from there. This involves conscious comparison and manipulation, and has some of the characteristics of "top-to-bottom processing".

One point against this second guess is that, as I said a while ago, this second type of processing—this second type of imagination—takes quite a bit of time and attention. Another point is in something that actually happened a few minutes after Ann had told me about the Norwegian conversation. (This was while the interview was still in progress.) During our interview, through a fantastic stroke of luck, Ann happened to overhear a comparable conversation between the Swahili teacher and me. Here again, Ann had a very strong sense of understanding everything, and she breathlessly offered to tell us what she had heard. In this case, her understanding was totally wrong, but it had clearly been reached by the same top-to-bottom processing that I would guess she had used in the earlier conversation. *DISTINCTION: Between top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top imagining.*

Imagination in Some Selected Techniques

And those are all the real people I'm going to introduce you to today. Now I'd like to turn with you to some existing methods and techniques, and look with you at how they stimulate imagination and exploit its magical powers.

Two excellent examples of imaginative teaching are found in Total Physical Response and in Jazz Chants. I think you've heard from their orginators in previous years at this conference. Both of these techniques have demonstrated again and again an amazing power to fix pieces of language—words, phrases, sentences—in students' minds so that the students can recognize and produce those same words, phrases, and sentences later on. In terms of my little sketch, I'd guess that they owe this success to the kinds of data that they store in the networks of memory along with the pieces of language. Both store a kind of excitement and arousal—frequently accompanied by humor—that many students find pleasant. Beyond this, TPR stores kinesthetic data, and Jazz Chants store a vigorous, surging, and very somatic rhythm.

But what do TPR and Jazz Chants do with the students' imagination? Surprisingly, perhaps, I think we have to say that these two techniques in themselves do not ask students to create or to supply, but only to listen and respond. There is no question that what gets retained in this way can be used in ancillary techniques that exploit the students' power to imagine, but the basic techniques in themselves do not exploit that power. The designers of the techniques were themselves remarkably imaginative, and teachers who prepare lessons with the techniques must be imaginative, but the students themselves are not imaginative, at least not in the sense we've talking about today.

Strategic Interaction

A third method that you may be familiar with is Strategic Interaction, which was devised and developed by the late Robert J. Di Pietro. A unit in Strategic Interaction is built around what Di Pietro called a 'scenario', and a scenario consists of three phases: a Rehearsal phase, a Performance phase, and a Debriefing phase.

In the Rehearsal phase, students receive the 'scenario' in the form of two or more sets of instructions. Each student receives only one or another set. The instructions agree as to setting and situation, but they differ in the roles assigned, in the conflicting goals to be pursued, and in some details of content. Students get together with others who have the same set of instructions, and use any and all means to prepare themselves so that one of their number can play the assigned role successfully in the Performance phase that's about to come up.

The Performance itself is carried out by representatives of the groups. It's extemporaneous, of course, but it also draws on all the hard work that went on in the Rehearsal phase. Elements of purpose and of appropriate emotion are very much in evidence.

Then in the Debriefing phase, students and teacher work in various ways with the language that had been created in the Performance phase.

This Strategic Interaction methodology provides for an extraordinary amount of creating and supplying by the students, and most conspicuously in its Rehearsal phase. Here, with the support—and with the nudging—of the scenario, students have to come up not only with their own words, but with their own lexical meanings; not only with their own meanings, but also with their own purposes; not only with their own words and phrases, but also with their own discourse structure. And in the Debriefing phase, what students and teacher talk *about* is language that has been brought to life by this recent involvement. So in that sense, Strategic Interaction makes great use of—in fact, it depends on—the imagination of its students.

Now let's look at a technique from a beginning ESL book by Frankel and Meyers (1991). This technique is an alternative way of making use of a time-honored format, namely the pairing of a picture and a dialog. It has seven steps:

1. Before the learners come into contact with the dialog in any form, they look at the picture and describe it in whatever words or phrases they can supply either in their NL or in the TL. They also guess what the people in the picture might be saying to each other. The teacher reflects what the learners say, using an interested, appreciative tone and correct language. The learners don't repeat after the teacher.

   [From the point of view of our interest in imagination, recognizing the major features of the picture is pretty much automatic, and requires the learners to supply very little. So the recognition part of this step is not what I would call 'imaginative'. But that's not all the learners are called on to do here. They're also called on to figure out how the features of the picture are related to one another, and what is going on among them. This information is not present in the black-and-white lines of the picture, and so must be supplied through imagination.

   [Also, the learners are called on to supply English words and sentences with which to express their ideas. If this were done in their native language, it might be close to automatic, but in the beginning stages of learning English, it calls for some ingenuity, and therefore for imagination. So in this first step, the learners have exercised imagination in the creation both of meanings and of forms. And the style of the teacher's responses—interested, appreciative—gives them a social recognition and reward, and not just academic approval or correction.]
2. The learners listen together to the uninterrupted full text of the dialog, and report what they think they have heard. The teacher writes their contributions on the board, without filling in gaps and without correcting.

   [This of course is a larger-scale example of the Type-F imagination that enabled my secretary to write 'Flaggenheisch'.]

3. The learners listen again, this time with their books open. They now check the forms that they have suggested against the forms on the page.

   [On the WT, the products of imagination are now being checked against new input from external reality.]

4. The learners indicate what they have not understood. The teacher explains or demonstrates meanings.

   [This requires noticing and comparing, which of themselves are not imaginative, but it also requires deciding and describing, which are imaginative.]

5. The learners work on pronunciation by some learner-initiated technique such as The Human Computer (™).

   [Again, this is the same noticing and comparing that are supposed to take place in more conventional techniques for working on pronunciation, but the student-initiation feature calls for deciding, and therefore for imagination.]

6. The learners practice together in dyads, working for greater familiarity and fluency, though not necessarily for absolute memorization.

   [The practicing itself looks a lot like conventional practice, but what's being practiced is to an unconventional extent the product of imagination, and not just taken off the page.]

7. The learners take turns acting out the dialog or some variant of it. Their purpose is to interest or amuse.

   [The products of imagination are thus again reinforced through social rewards, and not just through academic confirmation or correction.]

The technique that I'd like to leave last in your minds today also involves the pairing of words and pictures. The reason I've saved this one for last is not that it's the best, but that it comes with an anecdote, and the anecdote has a punch line that I think all of us who are interested in imagination will enjoy.

This is a technique mainly for intermediate or advanced students. It starts out with an ordinary dialog, such as we've been using ever since the days of audiolingalism: a couple hailing a taxi to go out for the evening, for example. It goes like this:

1. Students listen to the dialog, trying to understand it.
2. They listen again in the same way. This time, they notice what they haven't understood and ask questions, preferably in the target language. The teacher answers. This continues until the students are able to understand what the sentences of the dialog mean.
3. Students listen yet again, but this time they are asked to concentrate their attention on their own mental 'home movies' of what is happening. Here we find 'imagination' in its etymological sense of formating and creating mental *images*.
4. Then, about each line of the dialog no matter how brief or trivial that line may seem, students are asked three questions. **(1)** A visualization question: 'In your "home movie", was it dark yet?' These are questions that can't be answered from information contained in the dialog itself. Here, the students have to supply information out of their own Type-F mental imagery. **(2)** A question about purpose: 'In this line of the dialog, was the speaker concerned about the information it contained, or just trying to be agreeable?' Here, students have to notice and compare and make a simple decision about *meanings*. **(3)** Then, once having indentified the purpose, 'How else might the speaker have accomplished the same purpose?' Here, students have to supply *words*.

This technique proved both effective and enjoyable. The first time we tried it, it worked as we had hoped it would. But we noticed something else. There was one of the students—let's call him Bill—who was an earnest hard-working student of more than average general intelligence, but who week-after-week had seemed to plod along a few paces behind his more talented classmate. This time, however, Bill was right up there with the rest of them. What, we wondered, had made the differece? Then, as the class went out the door for a break, I heard Bill say to another student, 'In all my study of foreign languages, this is

the first time I knew what I was talking about!' And he knew that because and only because he had been given a chance to use his imagination!

From all I've said today, but most graphically from the story of Bill, I think we can pick out three principles—three rules of thumb—three conditions for the management of imagination in a language class. The first is to provide an *occasion* for imagining: to be certain that there's some need for something that the students can supply, whether that something be meanings or words or organization. The second is to allow *time* for students to come up with what is being asked for, and to remember that some students (Bill, for example) need more time for this than others. And the third is, once a student has provided what we have asked for, to be sure there's an appropriate social response other than just 'Yes, your language is correct': incredulity at the fact that a classmate actually visualized the taxi driver as 80 years old, for example.

This, then, would be my summary of what I've been able to find out about the imagining equipment that our students—and we ourselves—have been given: First, that our imagining equipment is intimately associated with our remembering equipment. Second, that its operation involves constant, recursive, dynamic interplay between what is automatic, very rapid, and largely beyond conscious control, and what is smaller, slower, and available for conscious management, Third, that in order for this wonderful equipment to serve our students best, we need to provide occasions for its use, and time, and some kind of distinctive, meaningful response to what imagination has produced. With these principles in mind, I wish you godspeed as you continue to use your own imaginations in the service of the imaginations of your students! Then, as Bill would have put it, they will better 'know what they are doing' because more of what they are doing has come from within themselves!

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NOTE: **Fuller harmonizing but mutually supplementary treatments of this view of memory will be found in my 'Memory: Old news, bad news, new news, good news', to appear in *JALT Journal* 15(3) 7-20, and 'How is strategic memorable? How memorable is "strategic"?', to appear in the Proceedings of the 1993 Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics.**

Imagination in Second Language Acquisition

Dr. James J. Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose State University in California, is best known as the innovator of the Total Physical Response approach to language teaching. His current book, to be published later this year, is The Super School of the 21st Century: We Can Have It Now.

By James J. Asher

Here is a string of symbols without meaning to an English speaker: "Hutilkitaabalataula." But to 100 million people in the world, that was a sentence communicating this message: "Put the book on the table."

To the celebrated linguist Noam Chomsky, what makes "Hutilkitaabalataula" a sentence to some people and a non-sentence to others is the most fascinating of all riddles because if we can discover what makes a sentence a sentence, we will have solved the mystery of human language. One piece of this puzzle has to do with imagination. Without imagination, there would be no language.

Here is how I think it works: Any language has the capacity to generate an infinite number of sentences. The key word is "infinite." The human mind seems to have no understanding about the concept of infinity. For example, in the set of all numbers, we can picture the first number in the series as " 1," but what is the last number? Even the notion that there is a "last" number feels strange because of the contradiction that if a "last" number exists, the series is not infinite. But how can there not be a last number? Every event in our experience has a beginning and an end. Then, to complicate the puzzle, no one knows whether that "last" number (if it exists) is odd or even.

Language is analogous to the set of all numbers. There is no "last "sentence, and, as another interesting twist, there is no "first" sentence. There are just sentences.

The mystery is this: How can children or adults in any culture sample different sentences in a target language and understand the multiple patterns from which sentences are created? The key word is, "patterns." Notice that each person does not have to sample the identical sentences in a fixed sequence from the population of sentences, but all, after sufficient sampling, discern the identical patterns from which all sentences are created in a target language. I suggest that discerning the patterns is an imaginary process.

In the sampling of sentences, patterns become transparent, but how? I believe the Total Physical Response approach gives some insight into how this works. Consider this example:

Hut il kitaab a la taula.	(Put the book on the table.)
Hut il warah a la taula.	(Put the paper on the table.)
Hut il suhaan a la taula.	(Put the dish on the table.)
Imshee al kursi.	(Walk to the chair.)
Imshee al taula.	(Walk to the table.)
Imshee al baab.	(Walk to the door.)

If you act out those sentences upon hearing them from a native speaker who models the action with you, then you will now be able to understand dozens of novel sentences, ones you have never heard before such as:

Hut il kursi a la taula.
Hut il kitaab a la kursi.
Hut il wàrah a la kitaab.
Hut il taula a la suhaan.
Imshee al baab wa hut il baab al kursi.

Incidentally, you will also instantly understand that the last sentence was "nonsensical" even though it is a legitimate sentence in the target language. (The sentence was: "Walk to the door and put the door on the chair.") Notice that with an input of only six sentences, crucial patterns become transparent so that non-existent sentences, never heard before, are also understood. In fact, as Garcia (1993) has pointed out, ten sentences with ten different elements in each sentence can be rearranged into more than three million

patterns, many of which are legitimate sentences in the target language. With only a small input, we achieve a gigabyte of output.

The learner can detect what is and what is not a legitimate sentence. Clearly, the secret of language acquisition is in pattern detection.

Patterns, Patterns, Patterns: What Is a Pattern?

Patterns do not exist since we cannot point to them, touch them, see them, hear them or feel them. We cannot use our senses to detect a pattern since it is more than the sum of its parts. For example, there is no such thing as a phoneme. It is non-existent if you attempt to find it in some physical measurement such as a voice recognition device that converts sound waves into a moving pen that draws on paper revolving on a drum. The phoneme, which is the smallest change in sound that produces a change in meaning, is easily illustrated with pairs of words such as: ball and hall, or band and hand, or sand and land.

If you examine ball and hall on the voice recorder, you will not discover any reliable physical evidence showing when the curves made by your voice shifted from ball to hall. The phoneme seems to be a product of our imagination. We create a change in a pattern from ball to hall that has no corresponding physical imprint. An analogy would be a table. There is no such thing as a "table." No one has ever seen a table. We have seen specific examples from which we seem to "abstract" the concept of table. This suggests that all abstractions are products of imagination since they do not exist in the real world.

As another illustration, if someone, who is non-mechanical, has a problem starting the car and lifts the hood, there is nothing to be seen. The person has no concepts or abstractions which allows one to "see" what is causing the car not to start. All patterns are invisible to this individual. In looking under the hood, all one sees is a chaotic-looking collection of wires, tubes, and other mechanical devices, but what do they mean? Without patterns in the imagination, there is no meaning.

Gestalt psychologists used the concept of a pattern to explain the process of learning. The instant one perceives the pattern, according to the Gestaltists, learning is complete. Compare the Gestalt approach with the S-R learning theorists who dominate educational psychology with the picture of learning as an incremental process in which one associates elements until they bond together in memory after many, many exposures. Learning to the S-R psychologists is a slow, step-by-step procedure that is complete only after one is exposed to the input for many trials.

Recent discoveries in brain research allow us to sort out the controversy in learning theories that occupied the attention of researchers for 80 years. For example, experimental evidence suggests that, indeed, as clinicians such as Broca believed more than one hundred years ago from observations of brain damaged patients, each hemisphere of the brain seems to have a different function.

The right brain (for right-handed people) is a pattern detector. It sorts through incoming sensory data searching for patterns much like the exciting new research in astronomy that slowly traverses the sky with a huge electronic ear that scans millions of random radio signals coming in from space, looking for patterns which would reveal the existence of intelligent life on other planets. Incidentally, any radio signal that is non-random suggests a transmission from an intelligent source.

The right brain can detect a pattern in one exposure and if it chooses, hold the pattern in memory indefinitely without editing. This is the principle that explains the extraordinary skill of mnemonic experts who can be introduced to 500 people in an audience and recall the first and last name of each individual. When the memory experts are first introduced to an individual, they create in their imagination, a pattern, usually a bizarre pattern, that contains a picture of the person and the first and last names.

For example, if the person's name is John Smith, the memory whiz may instantly create in imagination, a picture of the individual with a long, black beard and old fashioned clothing, sitting on the "john." The next time they see John Smith, the picture flashed again on the cognitive screen suggesting the first name of "John" and then the beard and clothing suggest a box of Smith Brothers Cough Drops, and hence the last name of "Smith." Since the right brain does no editing, it will accept any pattern no matter how crazy or outrageous. In fact, the more the pattern deviates from reality, the faster it can be retrieved. As an illustration, the imaginary picture could have been a gigantic box of Smith Brothers Cough Drops with

each of the brothers sitting on a "john." (Incidentally, the next time you see these cough drops in a store, I predict that you will see a picture of each brother sitting on a "john" and you will then remember reading this article.)

The left brain, for contrast, is the editor. It's specialized function is to find the flaws. It's job is to find fault—to detect imperfections—to gather evidence that an idea will not work. It's mission is a reality test of novel ideas to insure that we will not be harmed or deceived. It is dedicated to keeping us safe and sane. It is on automatic so that anything new, novel, or unfamiliar is instantly filtered through the flaw detector of the left brain.

How the Brain Guides Learning

Of course, both the Gestaltists and the S-R Theorists were on target. Both were accurate in their models of learning. The only difference was that the Gestaltists were looking at learning from the perspective of the right brain, and the S-R researchers were focused upon learning when it is processed through the left brain. Here is how it works: If information is presented in a dramatic pattern with motion, learning can be on the first exposure with long-term retention. The reason, of course, is that the pattern is input to the right hemisphere of the brain. A classic example is the metaphor.

Dr. James J. Asher (right) chats with Christine B. Root (left), Clyde Coreil (center) and Mihri Napoliello after his keynote address at the 1992 Conference on the Imagination at Jersey City State College.

Any effective teacher, preacher or politician will continually switch from the left to the right brain with a metaphor. The former President, Ronald Reagan, was a master at brainswitching using metaphors such as this to explain the national debt: It is difficult to determine the difference between a million dollars and a trillion dollars, but picture this in your imagination—if I was holding a stack of 1,000 dollars bills in this hand, I would be a millionaire if the stack was six inches high. If I had 1,000 dollar bills in this hand, I would be a trillionaire if the stack was sixty seven miles high.

Another contemporary master of brainswitching is H. Ross Perot who used this metaphor: The tax code is like an inner tube with a thousand patches.

Brainswitching: The Secret of Zero Stress, Long-Term Retention, and First Trial Learning

My hypothesis is that no genuine learning can happen until there is a brainswitch from the left to the right brain. "Genuine" means that the learning happens on the first exposure with zero stress and long-term retention.

Many language instructors have the illusion that left brain learning strategies are effective. Examples are pronunciation exercises, dialog memorizations, pattern drills, and grammar explanations. The evidence shows that only 4% of those who attempt a second language with a left brain "teaching people to talk" approach, continue to fluency (Asher, 1993). Those few who are successful with a left brain input often become language teachers themselves who are baffled that others cannot follow in their academic footsteps. "After all, I did it; why can't you do it?"

I believe that the 4% who threaded their way through traditional language courses for four, five or six years succeeded because, as individuals, without teacher assistance, they were able automatically and effortlessly to switch from the left to the right brain. This insight came from a colleague who acquired a second language in school and went on to become the head of the modern language department in a major university. "I'm curious to know how you did it," I asked him.

His explanation was that "Listen and repeat after me" exercises were not "work" for him. It was play. He enjoyed trying to make the sounds (probably because he was immediately successful). He did not perceive the activity as a threat. Also, as he drove to or from class, he enjoyed creating conversations in the target language with an imaginary friend. The boundary lines of the classroom activity was not from bell-ring to bell-ring, but continued as an intrinsically pleasurable event outside of class periods. An exciting

thesis for a research project would be to interview others who acquired a second language exclusively in school to discover how crucial brainswitching was to their success.

Brainswitching: Most of Us Need The Instructor's Help

The 4% of the student population who are immediately successful in traditional language classes have "high aptitude" for second language learning. Aptitude, in this context, suggests two components: First, they are recognized by the instructor as a "good language student" meaning they have the talent (unearned skill) to reproduce utterances in the target language with fidelity. The second component is that they "play" with the target language on their own time which suggests a self-initiated brainswitch from left to right such as creating a conversation with an imaginary friend.

However, 96% of the student population will not enjoy immediate success in exercises such as, "Listen and repeat after me!" There will be a normal bell-shaped curve with 4% able to mimic the instructor with almost a perfect match and everyone else deviating from perfection across the normal curve in a wide scatter. Hence, the great bulk of students will "study" and "work" only within the confines of each class meeting. There is no incentive (such as instructor recognition) to continue the activity outside the boundary lines of the class sessions.

Therefore, if we want most of the students to continue with a long-range commitment that keeps students going from level to level to fluency, then the instructor must skillfully and smoothly move the students back and forth from the right to the left brain. My Total Physical Response (known internationally as TPR) is one of the most powerful brainswitching techniques.

How To Do It: Start with Comprehension, Comprehension, Comprehension

Notice that in the traditional language classroom, students start with production followed by comprehension. Production is the star with comprehension the bit player who appears fleetingly on stage in the milliseconds after a question is asked. Comprehension has such a minor role, it receives no screen credits.

TPR reverses the sequence with comprehension as the star of the drama, and production is the supporting player because it appears later on stage—much later, perhaps after 10 to 20 hours of comprehension exercises.

Our premise is that, for almost all students, talking in the target language cannot be achieved directly by listening to the instructor and repeating strange utterances.

Where to Find a Blueprint to Follow

For a detailed road map showing the latest research on the right and left brain along with practical applications to motivation, learning, problem solving, work, play, counseling and more, I refer you to my book, *Brainswitching*. Then, to apply brainswitching to second language acquisition, these two books will guide you step by step for successful results: *Learning Another Language Through Actions* (newly expanded 4th edition) and Ramiro Garcia's *Instructor's Totebook: How to Apply TPR for Best Results.*

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Where the Magic Lies

Carolyn Graham is internationally known for her "Jazz Chants" books. As a teacher-trainer, she has conducted workshops throughout the world on the use of the arts in the ESL classroom. She is a Master Teacher at the American Language Institute at New York University, and is a summer teaching fellow at Harvard University.

An Interview with Carolyn Graham

JILL: Tell me about a teaching technique you've seen recently that draws heavily on the imagination.
GRAHAM: Let's see. Two of my colleagues at New York University, Margaret Canapa and Helen Harper, are doing quite wonderful things with their ESL students, having them write and perform in puppet shows. The students themselves write the scripts, make the costumes, the set; they also stage the show and put it on. I went to a production the other day, and it was truly inspiring. These are students in the intensive program who take regular, formal classes in the morning. In the afternoon, we're starting to have electives—like the Harvard program where the students choose how they want to pursue their English. It might be in theater or poetry or music or film; there're all sorts of possibilities.

Margaret and Helen's group opted to get into puppetry, which meant they would—among other things—discuss international folk tales. The class divided into groups of three or four students, and each group collected a set of tales. Then, for one of these tales, the group wrote a script, rehearsed it, made the puppets, and performed it. They're going to do them again for American children in schools around the [Greenwich] Village. Some were familiar stories like "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"; others were from other cultures. There were some from Japan, Korea—and an interesting Arabian version of "Little Red Riding Hood." In the show, the students sing old American songs like "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." It's really a charming idea.
JILL: And the purpose of it was to engage the students in an imaginative activity in order to enhance language learning.
GRAHAM: And to tap the students' creativity and imagination. We're the catalysts, and I like to see the students express their imagination. As teachers, we should give them the possibility of doing that. The whole focus should not be on the teacher, but on the students. And I love these activities that open up the student's imagination. Some students are very rooted in reality, and that's the way they're going to respond. There's no problem with that. It's just that now each of them gets a chance to show you who they are. That's true of poetry and a great many of these activities such as drawing, music and drama. Like the puppets—the students wrote the scripts and put themselves into it. This activity is wonderful—used in combination with a more formal program. For an intensive program where you've got the students for a lot of hours, it's a very good idea to give them activities that are expansive and creative. And it involves all the skills: writing, reading, speaking and working together.
JILL: Something you just said reminds me of a conversation I had recently with Walter Eliason of Rider College. We had been discussing the imagination. A look of slight concern came across his face at one point. "Now don't get the wrong idea," he said. "Creative activities are wonderful, but we do do other things as well in my classes." And he kept on talking and before long he added, "But maybe that's the only thing we *should* do in class." I had been lamenting that my lack of confidence limited me to only a few activites overtly calling on the imagination. I believe we concluded that both of us should look for a master teacher, a guru who did nothing but imagination. Now, let's turn to you. What are you up to these days in the way of projects?
GRAHAM:I'm interested in the fairy tale as the basis of elementary ESL work. Now, with the Common Market, English is becoming even more important in Europe. They have begun introducing it in the elementary schools. For example, in France, they're getting ready to teach English in the first grade on a very large scale. And right now, the teachers don't have material; they're not trained for that level. It's a whole new thing. It's also happening in the emerging nations of Eastern Europe. There are many things

that need to be done. And in this country, there're a lot of children with very different cultural backgrounds. I'd like to do what I can with fairy tales from different countries.

The way I got interested in this is through a project with Japanese fairy tales. I'm helping to prepare teaching materials for use in Japan. I've done songs and chants based on those tales, and now I'm working on a series of videos. It would be wonderful, I think, to use this approach in other places. The tales are interesting in themselves, and at the same time, it reinforces their own culture.

JILL: Material like that would be very interesting in Jersey City, which is said to be one of the most ethnically diverse areas in the world.

GRAHAM: So I've heard.

JILL: The time seems right for that sort of thing.

GRAHAM: I think that with our new [Clinton] administration, there's going to be a renewed interest in education. There certainly should be attention paid to elementary, because that's where we have a chance to do a lot for the kids. If we spend some time on the elementary classes, it's going to pay off.

JILL: Changing the focus a little, let me ask if you have any idea why the imagination is squelched as children grow up in our society? That is, children seem to have a vivid imagination, but as they get older, the schools seem to weed it out of them. Often, by the time they get a college degree, they don't seem to have any idea of what the imagination is.

GRAHAM: The imagination is certainly not encouraged in the traditional Western classroom. The imagination is frightening and unpredictable. You lose control of the child when you let that imagination loose. You really don't know where it's going to go. Some parents and some teachers feel that they want to be very much in control of what the child learns and what goes into the brain.

JILL: Have you encountered any society that is a little different?

GRAHAM: Well, I've heard that the aboriginals in Australia are quite different. There, in the course of a day, a person can write poetry, make paintings, compose music—and they don't think anything of it. And in Bali, that's also the case. Art is not a separate thing. Everybody seems to be an artist. The whole country is dancing and singing and making beautiful objects. I mean their daily life is intimately connected with art and music. For us, it's astonishing because we're never allowed to do that.

JILL: Have you ever been there—to Bali?

GRAHAM: I have. It's fantastic.

JILL: Is it our Western society that puts on the damper?

GRAHAM: Yes, I think it is. We place a very high value on the rational mind, science, logic and the like. And art was too often considered something that women did at home.

JILL: Teachers seem to often pass on this unfortunate tradition to their students. The work you were describing with folk tales seems one way of breaking this. Do you know of another of about the same promise?

GRAHAM: Some of the formula poem ideas also do that. Kenneth Koch has used these beautifully in his book *Wishes, Lies and Dreams*. Particularly where you bring the person back to their childhood. You ask them to remember what it was like when they were ten years old. You start to get them thinking in terms of their childhood. There's a simple little exercise that I used to do where you say, "I came into the world..." and then the student gives an "ing" word like "laughing" or "singing". By the way, this works well with adults. You model the sentence and have them provide only one word. Some students are funny; some are quite serious. Some will say that they came into the world shopping. Another will say he came into the world crying. Another will say that he came in wondering. And people start to think about who they are. Your choice of a word is very expressive of who you are and how much you are willing to reveal. You might do something funny so that people don't get too close, or you might be open. It's fascinating.

Things like that are excellent for new semesters where teachers don't know each other, where the ice needs to be broken. They get to know each other in a much more intimate way than they would through simple introductions. This could be presented as something that they might like to do with their students. Through activities of this kind, we all become a little more aware of sounds and rhythms and color and language. I personally spend a lot of time with my students talking about how beautiful and musical En-

glish is for me, at least. I think that the students are very happy to hear that and understand that. Singers love the sound of some of the irregular past participles such as done, gone, seen, etc. because it's so lovely and nice to sing with long, stretched out, poetic sounds. These aspects of teaching are interesting to talk about—just the pure pleasure of the sound. It's fun to do that. Closely related to this is rhyming; there is something very satisfying about rhymes. Children like them. And I think that it's important for children to develop their ears—to hear and enjoy rhyming and eventually make their own rhymes.

JILL: Can you think of any other teacher get-together activities?

GRAHAM: There's one I learned about in a seminar in Boston that had nothing to do with ESL. You ask each person to bring an object from their life that carries a story. You put all of the objects on a table and ask everyone to walk around the table, look at the objects and try to imagine something about the stories they contain. The objects themselves are always fascinating. The range from a little piece of clothing to a sculpture to an old postage stamp, a faded rose, a letter. Then, if it's a small group, say under 20, you ask someone to come up and choose the object that interests them the most. The person who brought the particular object gets up and talks about the object. Then that second person chooses an object, and so on. If it's a large group or if you're limited by time, then you don't put the objects on a table. Instead, you put everyone into groups of four. One pair tells their stories to each other, and then each tells the stories of the other to another member of the group. So that by the end of the activity, each person has told his or her own story, listened to another story and told that other story. This was done with 500 people in a huge gymnasium in Boston. It's a wonderful exercise. It teaches us to listen—to other people and not only ourselves.

JILL: I wonder would that work in a regular ESL program, at the beginning of the year.

GRAHAM: I think it would.

JILL: I have a note here about something that I don't know if you're particularly interested in. It's about the imagination as being a function of the mind essential to the acquisition of language, or more generally to the acquisition of all knowledge.

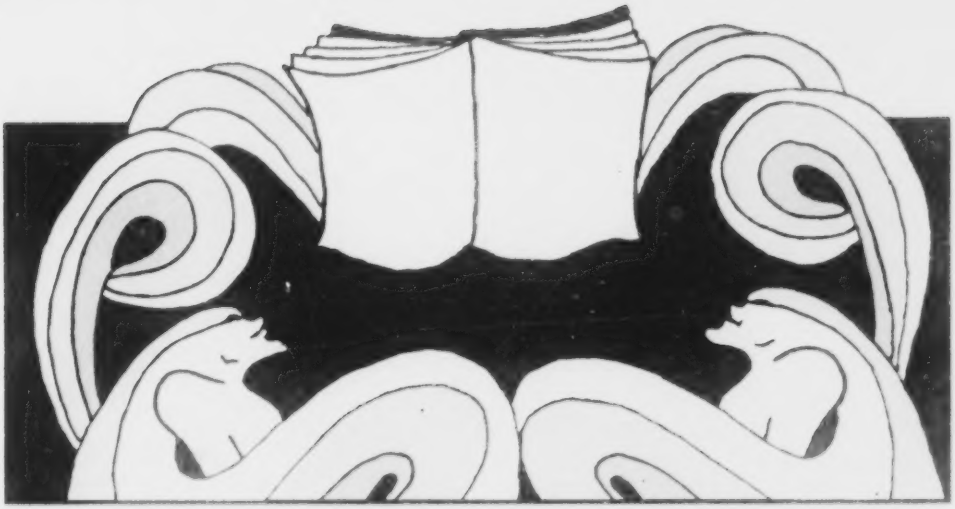
GRAHAM: It's essential to discovery. That's obviously what enables people to break the path. That's what leads us forward. Without that, we wouldn't go anywhere; we would just keep repeating the past. You can educate a child, if you mean by that to learn what happened. Without imagination, you can learn just about everything in history. But if you're talking about real education, which is how to live and how to discover, and how to break new ground and how to open up the world for the next generation, you've got to have imagination for that. That's what does it, isn't it. Without curiosity and imagination, we wouldn't have any progress. We wouldn't have any change.

JILL: That's a beautiful, large basis you're giving for education.

GRAHAM: Well, it seems to me that that is it. Unless you only want to teach about what has already been discovered, it's just not that interesting. The point where it becomes interesting is when you give them the power to do it themselves. And we can't tell what they will do, because the ability to do something totally original is what we have given them. New ideas are what are powerful and exciting. Imagination is what does that, isn't it?

JILL: So that you're saying that allowing the student's imagination to remain open and possibly keep evolving and developing is one of the most significant gifts a teacher can give.

GRAHAM: I think so. Because I like the idea of a society that has that. I mean that is in the best tradition of what we supposedly have, as opposed to a very restrictive society where it's very set what the students learn. And they go into a job and they stay in that job, and it's very orderly and tidy. Our society, on the other hand, is very disorderly and unpredictable and beset with problems...but it does have a very bright side—the sheer amount of creativity on the streets of New York is phenomenal. The creativity of these half-educated kids just sort of on the loose—their language creativity—it's amazing to me what they do. It's wonderful what they do with their clothing and music and lifestyle. It's all original; nobody's ever seen it. They're out there, they're rapping, they're break-dancing—you don't know what they're going to do. And it's imagination that's doing all that. And I'm very impressed by it because I think that it's powerful and wonderful to see it happening.



JILL: To be frank, I had never thought much about that—the creativity of New York streets.
GRAHAM: Or any streets. There's a very dark side, but if you want to talk about imagination, you can surely see it in our country. It's there. And it's strong and it is a source of hope, a very positive hope.
JILL: In a nutshell, what can the average teacher do to foster the imagination?
GRAHAM: It seems to me that the imagination—like so many things—has to be fed to grow, to blossom and to flourish. First, maybe, it needs not to be squelched when the individual is young. It also benefits from encouragement. It develops by being given the permission to do it and by seeing what can be produced. Feedback is very important. One thing that always bothered me was seeing those little duplicated turkeys that the children are supposed to color in. They call that an art lesson. That will really do it—kill the child's interest in art. Giving them another person's drawing to work with in one way is telling them that their drawing is not good. Or else the kid grows up with Disney as a model. I've seen a lot of kids who've trained themselves to draw like Disney, especially in Taiwan and Japan. They love the Disney figures. They seem to feel that when you draw an animal, the Disney model is what you want. They aspire to those particular stylized forms. For Disney, they were highly imaginative. But now what? And if you go to the Disney movies, they're copying him too. Disneyland is fantastic and wonderful, but we shouldn't forget to encourage students to exercise their own imagination. That's where the magic lies.
JILL: Would you care to mention any other teaching techniques you might happen to be working on at the present?
GRAHAM: Yes. I'm focusing very much on teaching students to think in English. I'm working very closely with them in developing exercises. For example, when they wake up in the morning, I'd like for them to have their first thought in English. What we do is we talk about what we really do when we first wake up. They're all different, but they do do some things in common. There are certain categories of expression, such as those of time and weather, that are used a lot by native speakers; for example, "I wonder what time it is?" or "I wish I didn't have to get up" or "My, what a beautiful day." I'm giving them the language for the thoughts. The students tell me in their own language what they thought of yesterday morning—their very first thought—and we find the English equivalents. They write it on cards, which they put next to their alarm clock and read right when they wake up. And then we go through the morning with other cards and similar exercises. It's like "jazz walking"; they respond in English to their environment and their activities such as dressing and shopping. This provides a way of practicing by themselves, in their mind. And I'm also working with different rhythms in language so that they'll also have that. They walk around with the beat to a song in their minds and practicing the expressions in English. I call those expressions "Ritual English." It's that sort of thing that I'm working on at the present.

It's that sort of thing that I'm working on at the present.

Drawing on Experience: The Interview

John Dumicich is an adjunct Associate Professor of ESL at the American Language Institute at New York University and also teaches at Hunter College, City University of New York. He has done extensive teacher training in language acquisition for the United States Information Agency in Eastern Europe and Pakistan.

With John Dumicich

JILL: I was much impressed by your workshop on the use of drawing in the teaching of writing at the Imagination Conference at Jersey City State College a couple of years ago. You recommended a certain procedure. Let's start there. Would you describe that procedure?

DUMICICH: Sure. The first step is rapid writing, which I used to call "free writing." I give the students these instructions: First, write anything that comes to mind. Second, don't worry about grammar and spelling. Third, put the tip of your pen or pencil on the paper and don't lift it until your teacher tells you to stop. Fourth, write as fast as you can for ten minutes. Fifth, if you don't know what to write, then write, "I don't know what to write." Write this again and again until something comes to mind. Sixth, don't use a dictionary and don't erase. If you don't know a word in English, leave a blank space or write it anyway you can.

Then, I have them write a summary sentence, which I describe informally as a complete sentence that gives the general idea of your rapid writing. The next step is "crossing out," which consists of putting a line through everything in your rapid writing that doesn't connect with your summary sentence. After that is done, we revise. I explain that revising is reading through a piece of writing carefully, making improvements, and correcting mistakes. You can change what you say and how you say it. Good writing has many "sides." A piece of writing is just like a diamond: the more you polish each side, the more the piece will shine. The more you revise your writing, the better it will be. The sides of good writing are (1) message or content, (2) organization of ideas, (3) choice of words, (4) grammar, and (5) punctuation. The final big step in the process of writing is rewriting, which results in a final draft.

Now where does drawing fit in? One place is before this process begins. Some people call this stage brainstorming. It's establishing what you're going to write about.

JILL: Why have them go to the trouble of drawing? Why not just give them a printed picture?

DUMICICH: I have done that. Many teachers will continue to do that. Drawing comes entirely from the student. With a picture or photograph from a magazine, you have to recreate in writing what the picture shows you—focusing on other peoples details. Drawing focuses on your own details. Of course it's not formal drawing for the sake of drawing. It's drawing with any pen or pencil—usually on an 8 x 11 inch page of typing paper—for the sake of writing.

I had one situation where I saw a blank sheet, and I went up to the student and said, "Go ahead; draw something." She said, "I did." I looked but didn't see anything. She pointed to a dot in the center of the page. This dot turned into a three page composition. So, whatever you draw, you see it from your own perspective. You know what you're drawing and what words you need—as opposed to me giving you what you should need, what you should create. Interpretation is inevitable, and it seems more natural when you interpret something you have done.

JILL: That certainly seemed true in the class I just observed. You asked them to draw an image from a dream they had. They quickly settled into drawing and about five or ten minutes later were eager to show and explain to the others what they had done. What I found interesting was how they didn't take turns showing their drawings to the whole class, but circulated at will, talking to one or two other students and then moving on to other students in a very informal, relaxed way. A couple of them even included me in the process, asking me to talk about my drawing.

EDITORS' NOTE: A discussion that is closely related to the following interview is "Drawing on Experience: The Article" by Christine B. Root. It appears in this issue of the Journal.

NOTE: JILL: Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning

DUMICICH: For me, it usually works as a way of loosening the students up and giving them something to write about. Often, the next step is simply writing down individual words about the drawing they made —in today's class, a drawing of something they remember from one of their dreams. They then write sentences that include these words. Once you have the drawings, there're any number of things you can do. I like to integrate such activities with larger plans involving, for example, doing a reading about sleep and sleep habits and having the students interview each other and then "interview themselves" and write about it.

JILL: I'm trying to come up with an explanation of the seemingly obvious: that is, why is it more effective to use teaching techniques that call on the imagination as contrasted to more passive approaches?

DUMICICH: Robert Ornstein—particularly in *Multimind* and *The Evolution of Consciousness*—talks about "image formation." Earl Stevick talks about imagery in *Images and Options in the Language Classroom*. In *A Way and Ways*, he mentions how already existing pictures make the student more dependent on the teacher. Ornstein mentions that our lives are governed through symbols. We abstract on it and that slowly takes form. What the students draw are symbols of what they have in mind because no rendition can be true. But these are pieces that the person is invested in. Try to stop the student from using his or her imagination—that takes much more energy than to let the imagination go.

There is investment of another type: it's not learning language alone; it's clarifying things in your own head. Interesting vocabulary items come out. In today's class, one student drew a hot-air balloon with a man riding in the basket. That student came to me and asked, pointing to her drawing, "What's the name of the thing the man is looking through?" The answer was "a telescope." "What are these things that hold the balloon down?" she asked, pointing to these little round things in her drawing. The answer was "sandbags," an item that does not occur in many ESL texts. She'll never forget it. I don't know when she'll want to use the word, but it's there. It has something to do with investment. You have created the need for it. Learn it under those conditions, and it's yours forever.

JILL: I missed the first half of your class this morning.

DUMICICH: Which had nothing to do with the second half.

JILL: A couple of students I heard talking seemed rather impressed with it. I'm curious. What did you do?

DUMICICH: I used the technique of the strip story. There were twelve people in class, and every person got one part of a story—one sentence—on a strip of paper. Each of them had to memorize his line and then give the strip back to me. Then, they had to recreate the story from memory. They formed a circle where their positions depended on the sequence of events in the story. Each student recited his line in a telling of the complete story. Then I had them do some rapid writing about the content of the story. In their homework today, they had to write a twelve-line story—not a composition—and divide it into strips. Writing in twelve lines is usually quite a bit more difficult than writing a three-page composition.

JILL: And you distribute the strips.

DUICICH: Right. And they decide the order. The student who wrote the story is, in effect, the teacher during this exercise.

JILL: Sounds like fun. I wish I had been there. Getting back to drawing—how often do you use that technique with your intensive English classes?

DUMICICH: How often? In part, it depends on what I'm trying to develop in terms of publications and my repertoire in general. When I'm working on similar material, I use it much more often than when I'm working on other techniques. This semester, I use it about once a month. Other semesters, when I was actively developing it, I would use it once a week.

JILL: And have you found it productive as a source of variations?

DUMICICH: Yes. Once you get the student to draw as symbolically, as crudely, as sufficiently as necessary to bring out whatever he or she has, then that's the core. I have an actress in class. She gets involved, invested when you give her the front of the classroom to work with. I've given her poetry to write and deliver, which she does very well. Writing a composition is different—it's hard work. Writing a poem seems to be less work for some reason. Drawing is no work at all—other than the initial, "I can't draw," which

doesn't concern me because it's not an art class. The point here is that once the student manages to bring out something he's comfortable with, the class is smoother; I get a lot more work.

JILL: In a sense, describing a dream is a short story. But do you ever get into the more disciplined demands of short story writing?

DUMICICH: Absolutely. Today, they wrote a twelve-line story. Other times, their writing does become more of a traditional short story. If the actress had been in class this morning, I had planned to develop a treatment for a movie. She would have taken over the directing and acting for the whole class. When she didn't show up, I changed it into an activity in which every student did a mini-session of a strip story. But yes, I do take it along those lines, quite often.

JILL: How much time do your students spend in class each week—twelve hours?

DUMICICH: They study twenty hours a week. I have them four days a week, three hours a day.

JILL: I see. And techniques that involve the imagination do form the bulk of your repertoire?

Student Toshihiko Komoto proudly displays a drawing he made in John Dumicich's class.

DUMICICH: Pretty much. Imaginative? I guess. Interactive? I guess. There is a place for the grammar book and exercises so that they don't have to think so much. There's some security in using a book with exercises—it's a whole other thing. They relax in the familiarity of what they're doing. Whereas when they're doing something interactive or imaginative, some energy is spent on figuring out what it is they think I think I want.

JILL: Your presentation at Jersey City State College went very well indeed. I imagine that you've done quite a bit of that sort of thing.

DUMICICH: I did some lecture tours for the U.S.I.A. [United States Information Agency] in Bulgaria, Pakistan, Yugoslavia—when there was a Yugoslavia. Things like that. Now that I'm working with Christine Root [of Harvard University], we'll probably do some conferences here.

JILL: Do you care to mention some of the angles of approach you and Christine will be delving into?

DUMICICH: The handout for the workshop at Jersey City State will be the core. Christine and I have expanded that handout to a full-length manuscript called *Drawing on Experience*.

JILL: And what did she bring to that project?

DUMICICH: An understanding of the vision.

JILL: That's a heavy contribution.

DUMICICH: Yeah. Working on it alone was lonely and boring. There was no bouncing of ideas. Now Christine and I use faxes to send material and suggestions back and forth. There's a lot of "bounce" — that's the word.

JILL: I understand that she's developing new techniques for teaching grammar. Has that found its way into the manuscript?

DUMICICH: Not really. The focus of the book is rather narrow: it involves drawing more than anything else. We have to educate teachers through the book so that they can educate the students. I've never been great on grammar—it's not my thing.

JILL: The handout on drawing you gave out today was quite productive. Do you call for any others in *Drawing on Experience*?

DUMICICH: At the beginning of the semester, I did give them a handout on attitudes—Do you like to write? Why or why not? That sort of thing. It's important for them—and us—to realize what our attitudes are because vague assumptions often limit our ability to do certain things.

JILL: Are there other types of drawings done in your class?

DUMICICH: Yes. For example, we have done collaborative drawings. I had an easel with a drawing pad and drawing materials in the front of the classroom. One student would go up and draw a line. Then another student would extend that line in any way he or she saw fit. In that way, the original line would grow and mushroom and take all sorts of forms. That's rather challenging because the group as a whole

had to decide, to establish what the thing being drawn is. Doing that requires words, argument, debate. That requires focusing vision. "I don't see that," one student says. Another chimes in with, "Look at that line going that way." "Oh, I see what you're talking about."

JILL: How often do you do that?

DUMICICH: Oh, about twice a semester.

JILL: Do you have yet more activities employing visual imagination?

DUMICICH: Collages, for example collages advertising something. They used colored paper and glue. I don't use magazines; you could, of course, but I don't because I like the message to come directly from the students. This collage-making could be done individually, in small groups or with the whole class. What first has to happen is that the individual or group must discuss and decide on what is going to be advertised. This generates a lot of discussion. Then, they have to decide how to project that product or service. More discussion. With bits of colored paper, no print, they have to create a message. I have the students tear the bits of paper to avoid using scissors. Once they have the product and message, we can go on to oral presentation or writing samples. It's usually interesting. I have been amazed more than once.

JILL: Did all of the students work on one collage or did each student do his or her own?

DUMICICH: Both. Collaborative and individual. Collaboration is good when you make up an advertisement. You first decide what you're going to advertise—that takes a lot of discussion and negotiation. There are no words in the collage: that's why blank construction paper is good. Images, all images. The words appear in student writing later. I do separate the two—images and words—as much as I can.

JILL: And I suppose this can be done in class or at home.

DUMICICH: Yes. I usually like to do things first in class to see what kind of dynamics go on. After that, it's very convenient to assign it for homework.

JILL: That's four techniques: individual and collaborative drawing, and individual and collaboratve collages. Any others?

DUMICICH: I don't think so. Ah! I hadn't thought about it in quite a while, but when I was going to elementary school in Italy, we used clay to do sculpture. Maybe I'll try it here.

JILL: If you do, give me a call. I'd like to watch. It's easy for me to talk about these techniques to you and to other teachers, but when it comes to implementing them in my classroom, sometimes they get all bollixed up. More often, I just don't try.

DUMICICH: Alot of what anyone can do depends on the nature of the particular group of students he or she is teaching. The group you observed today is surprisingly well meshed. They get along; they have evolved. There are groups that don't seem to grow together. I'm very lucky this semester.

JILL: Do you use psychodynamic techniques to get them to develop as a group?

DUMICICH: Yes. Through the semesters, all sorts of things. I never really know exactly what I'm going to do along those lines until I, in effect, do it. It depends on what they do. One thing that has worked in the past is a simple worksheet to find someone in the class who has read a book in the past week, who plays a musical instrument, etc. First, they learn each other's names. Then they learn something about that other person. The more interaction you have between people, the more they will be invested in one another. The people in today's group help each other all the time. That's not really an accident—it is fostered, it evolves. They're given the opportunity to talk to other people, to criticize, to say you've done very well, you've made a mistake. In learning, everyone makes mistakes—you, me, everyone. There's nothing in the least unusual or shameful about it. I try to get students to realize that.

JILL: So you foster the development of a class as interacting members of a group. That's a wonderful thing to do.

DUMICICH: My guiding light along these lines is—find out who the natural leaders in the class are, and then work on that person or those persons accordingly. Occasionally, it's necessary to draw that person out—because there are very quiet people who sometimes have the control. Sometimes they are very boisterous. There are all sorts of leaders—the academic leaders, the clown leaders, the joking leaders, the secretary leaders. You have to find out who they are and then deal with them accordingly.

JILL: Is there a way you've found to use drawing in getting the class to cohere and grow and develop as a group?

DUMICICH: In individual drawing, everyone is equal in that he or she has the opportunity to draw a line, which is enough. I like for students to share each other's drawings. When they do that, when they walk around and look at other people's work, they inadvertently explain their own. "What is this?" is a very common question. The student who is asked has to respond. In that situation, pretty much everyone talks, more or less meaningfully, about things that are more or less close to him or her. Even the more boisterous students wind up listening carefully. The quiet people need the confidence they gain from talking. The end result, from one point of view, is sharing, confidence, a willingness to listen, a willingness to question. So, yes. There are definitely things about the drawing activity that tend to bring the class together.

Students of John Dumicich (second right) compare drawings of images from their dreams. These quickly completed works generate much conversation and writing.

JILL: Before we wind this interview up, I'll ask you to comment on two incidents or techniques or whatever in which you think I might be interested. If nothing comes to mind, forget it. You've already given me a lot to think about.

DUMICICH: I'll try. Let's see. Yes. At Harvard—where I teach in the summer—I was working on a project with students in which all communication is done by letter. I would get a student's composition, and I would not mark it, but write him or her an individual memo, which I would sign and put in an envelope with his or her name on it, and then seal it. In the memo, I would tell them what I think of the writing. When I would find some grammatical errors, I would make on the spot exercises, which come easily after twenty years of teaching. Or, I would look at the index of my grammar book and say, "In this line of your composition, you made such-and-such an error. Look at page so-and-so of your grammar book and present a lesson to the class next Monday. Now this memo system of communicating with students is nothing short of fantastic. I love it tremendously.

JILL: Have you ever heard of anyone else using the "memo system?"

DUMICICH: No. As far as I know, it's original. In the second technique you just made me think of, the imagination is more directly involved. I assigned John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* for reading. It's short and simple—seemingly simple. The instructions were to read the book and then make a project related to it. If you are an artist, make an oil painting of a scene that is described, a landscape, an incident, a character, an abstract—anything the source of which is somehow the book. Or it could be a long poem or a series of poems in some way related to the book. It could be a short story. Or a piece of embroidery or a collage. Anything non-academic. I do not accept a book report or an essay. I accept anything that lets me understand that they read and understood and possibly responded to the book.

The projects handed in ranged from minimally satisfactory to truly spectacular. One was an "epic" poem written from the pearl's point of view: that was pretty good. Another student was a Korean woman musician. In the book, Steinbeck talks about the Song of the Family, the Song of Evil, the Song of the Enemy. I interpret these "songs" to be the internal dialogue that we have in our own heads. Well, this Korean woman composed original music for "The Song of the Family," "The Song of the Enemy," "The Song of Evil," and for each of the other songs in the book. She gave everyone in class a copy of the music she had written—the notes on a scale. Then she took a violin and played each piece of her own, originally composed music. "The Song of the Family" had a family "feel" and "The Song of the Enemy" was very jarring. It was incredible—very moving. I've given the same project to my students this semester. We'll see what they do with it.

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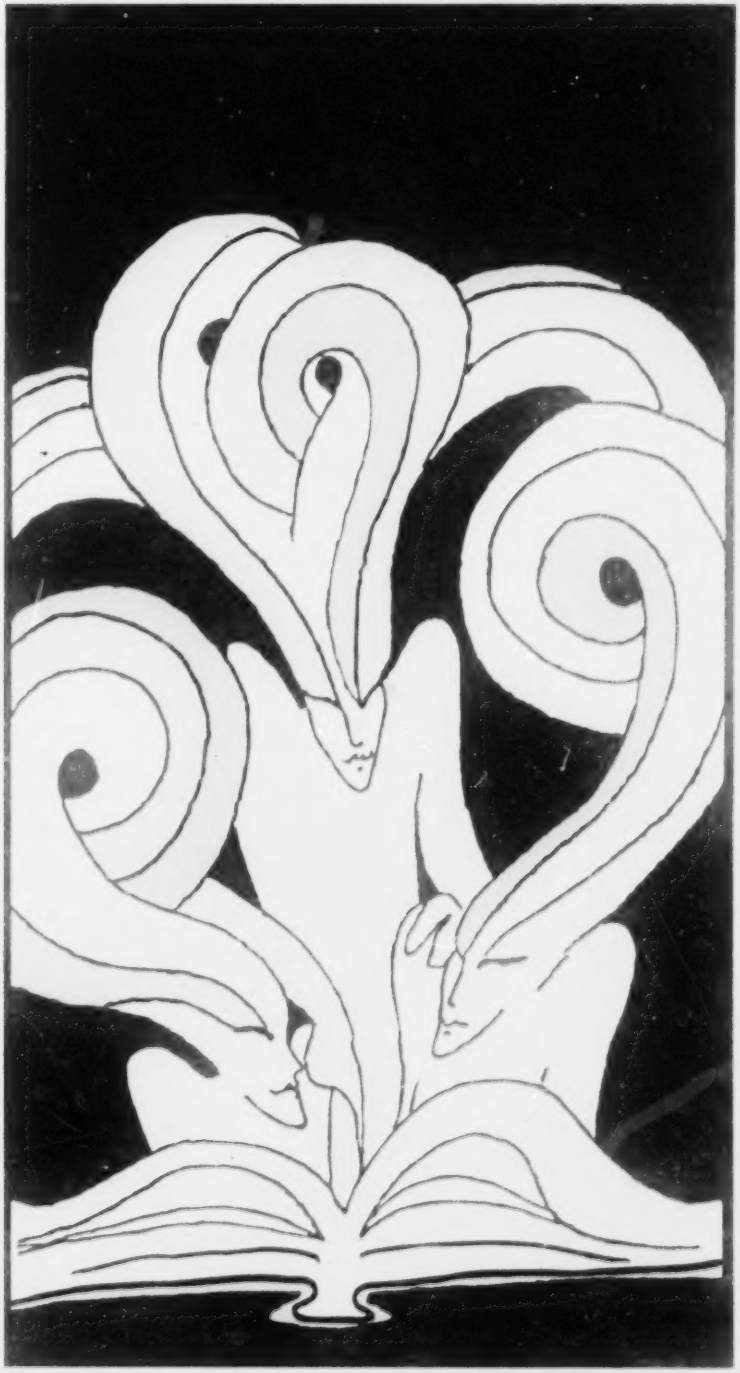

What Color Is Your Picnic Basket?

Susan Litt is a full-time ESL teacher in the Union, New Jersey public schools and an adjunct professor at Kean College of New Jersey. She has a B.A. in speeech correction and an M.A. in TESL. She is an active teacher trainer and has a private accent reduction practice.

An Interview with Susan Litt

JILL: Tell me about one of the teaching techniques you use, one that employs the imagination.
LITT: In teaching auditory discrimination and listening, I sometimes ask people to close their eyes. They have a lot of trouble with that. Especially adults. Right now I'm working with an adult Oriental male. It's very hard for him to just let loose and close his eyes for a minute and listen to something or other. He becomes very uptight and fearful. That's unfortunate because in teaching listening, it's very important to learn to block out everything visual and just use your ears. I have a book, *Purple Cows and Potato Chips*, that does happen to work on listening. It stresses the use of the senses and, for me, that involves the use of the imagination. One of the exercises calls for the playing of a piece of music and having the students relax. Then it asks them to close their eyes and imagine themselves somewhere, say, on a picnic. I try to get them to conjure up pictures and then I start asking questions like, "What are you wearing—to the imaginary picnic? What are you doing? Who's with you? What color is the picnic basket? How far away are the trees?" Things like that. The class is divided into groups, and the students discuss their answers with other members of his or her group. So that, through the use of their imagination, the students are led to other activities—in this case, group discussions. This use of the multi-sensory approach is very good for the students, and very interesting for the teacher.
JILL: And I would imagine that the students are very eager to articulate what they are "experiencing," and that this exercise creates a most valuable immediate and pressing wish to communicate.
LITT: Yes. And you can take the exercise in two directions: you can have students jot down answers and comments that they will use later in a speaking experience, or you can expand the activity into the basis of a writing assignment. For example, one assignment could be, "Write a story about your afternoon at the park." This is one way to use the imagination in the teaching of listening.

Another thing to do is have the students go outside, close their eyes and listen carefully to all of the sounds in the environment—outside because that's a nice place to go. Later, I have them do it in the classroom, in their kitchens at home, in the hallways—always closing their eyes, listening carefully then listing and describing what they hear. People generally are not aware of the sounds around them, sounds they normally block out. What you find out is that there are a lot of children who don't block out sounds, and that gets in the way of their working. That's sometimes the case with children who have learning disabilities. I myself am having a problem related to this. We just got a new stereo television set. The quality of sound is good, too good. Now, I'm hearing too much background noise, and it is getting in the way of my hearing what's being said. I find it very annoying. And I think of children who have learning disabilities and who can't block out sounds—I understand why they have difficulty concentrating. Even in the average classroom with the windows open, there are a multitude of sounds—airplanes, horns honking, garbage cans banging, birds chirping. Normally, you just block it out. I try to make students aware of what they're doing.
JILL: And the listening exercise that employs imagination—is that a way to teach them to block out sounds?
LITT: Sometimes, but it's hard. You've got to get them to focus on a particular sound, a voice they know. And you go about it slowly, in small pieces of time. I do have a tape with voices over background noises. On side number two, the background noises are extremely loud. It forces them to attempt to concentrate, to block out noise.
JILL: Is that a technique you've developed?

LITT: No. It's from a canned program for learning disabled children, but I find that it helps all of my students, who range in age from 5 to 10. It forces them to concentrate on human voices as opposed to the other sounds.

JILL: Do you teach learning disabled children as well as ESL?

LITT: No. At this point, I only teach ESL. However, I do have two learning disabled students that are in a perceptually impaired class. I also teach classes in methods of teaching ESL and in pronunciation for incoming students at Kean College.

JILL: Do you care to mention some other techniques you've been using?

LITT: There's the "Listening Association" in which students are asked to name an object or activity upon hearing a stimulus. For example, I say "key," and they respond with an association like "car" and they describe the car. Another lesson is a listening chain activity called "I'm Going on a Trip," in which the first student says, "I'm going on a trip and I'm packing an alarm clock." The next student says, "I'm going on a trip and I'm packing an alarm clock and a bathrobe"—the list of packed items continues to grow. This chain incorporates the skill of memory, too.

JILL: Would you call that a situation of optimal learning?

LITT: Yes. I think that optimal learning involves the creation of a situation that they can figure out for themselves. I try to set up a situation and provide them the opportunity to solve some problem or other. It's different when you're working with elementary and intermediate level students on the one hand, and when you're working with adults. I don't follow canned programs. I have such programs, but I don't follow them. I do what I feel the kids need. I'm very much into the Natural Approach, into hands on learning, into creating situations in which they don't even know that they're learning, but they are.

JILL: We've been talking mainly about listening. Have you found the imagination directly relevant in the development of writing skills?

LITT: Trying to get students to think things through and find a natural sequence when they're putting their ideas on paper is very difficult. I have always found that getting them to verbalize first is good. You do the brainstorming and you talk, verbalize and try to picture. I always say to my kids, "Get a picture in your mind, talk about it, and then write about it." Or give them an actual picture. If we're doing winter, and we've come up with maybe fifty words about that season, then I'll give them a picture of a winter scene, and I'll say, "Okay, now make believe you're one of the people in this picture. Which one are you? What do you see around you? What's happening? How do you feel?" Then, I'll get them to talk and then they'll start to write. I never just give them a sheet of paper and ask them to write cold turkey. So, first I get them to visualize. And visualization helps them get something more concrete, and then they can try to find the words.

JILL: Do you ever use paintings?

LITT: Not so much with young students. I bring in pictures and realia—real objects. I've brought in clothes and had them get dressed up. For—example, last year we read the story of "The Three Little Pigs." We talked about it, and then they acted it out. But first they had to figure out how in the limited space of a fairly small classroom, they were going to make houses. So they had to create. What they ended up doing was taking these desks and adding to them. For the house of sticks, they took tongue depressors and glued them onto paper and taped the paper to the top of the desk to create an effect of sticks. They have to use their imagination to find solutions like that.

JILL: Delightful. But exactly where is the connection to language learning?

LITT: We read the story, told the story, and we discussed it using past tense. Then the students spoke in the personna of the pig, and then they actually acted it out after an exercise in problem solving. They designed solutions and constructed them. All through this, there's a lot of language being used. And that's the goal—good, spontaneous language.

JILL: And do you consciously insert language structures in this type of instruction?

LITT: Sometimes you have to. When the curriculum says they have to learn certain things. Or when I notice that they are having trouble with a certain grammatical construction such as the past tense in ques-

tions and answers. In which case we practice the particular forms through conversation like, "What did you watch on television last night?" or "Did you see a certain program last night?" or "What did the pig do?" "He built a house." "What did the wolf do?" "He blew on the door." We do indeed bring the structures in, but we bring them in the back way.

JILL: I assume such discrete points are addressed more or less analytically in their other classes.

LITT: Yes. If we try to do that in here, they really get bored. I try to make it fun for them. For me, ESL classes are supposed to be fun. With my own children, I didn't say that under these conditions we use this question word or that past tense marker. We just talked and it happened. That's what I try to do here.

JILL: I had no idea that you were so convinced of the effectiveness of techniques that call on the imagination.

LITT: Oh, yes. I do not believe in following books. I have books because the administration says we must have them. And I do use them. I use them when I need them. Definitely. But more important, I believe, is having fun, having them partake—having them actually plan what we're doing. And when they participate in that way, it makes it all so much more successful. We're just getting underway this year, and we aren't finished with testing yet. Kids I have had before keep on coming in and asking when are we starting—they have fun.

Susan Litt reads a picture-book story to four of her young students

For instance, I took them on a trip to the supermarket last year and they had a ball. There's a cooking studio there that could accommodate 14 kids. They made pizza. They stuffed celery and made little cars with it, adding pieces of carrots for the wheels. That's the imagination. They had fun learning the words and doing something. We went to the seafood department—they held a lobster. The clerk explained how crabs and lobsters walk. We went to the produce department and the kids learned how to squeeze fresh orange juice. We went to the bakery, and they saw the ovens and tasted fresh rolls. So a boring supermarket became a fun experience. Also I try to incorporate their own country. I try to ask them about how they did things there. The kids tend to be embarrassed about it. They don't want to use their language. We've got to get past that response, make them feel proud.

JILL: These are very young students. Are adults more resistant to their own imagination?

LITT: Definitely. That is they tend to be. But it is possible. In my college writing classes, I also use visualization techniques and physical movement to teach them things like prepositions. I tell them to get under the desk. They balk at first. Then one does it, and everyone laughs and the barriers begin to come down. But, generally, it is much more difficult with the adults. Even with the high school kids. They're much more resistant, much more rigid. The little ones are just wonderful in this respect.

JILL: What has been the response of the teachers you teach at the college? Are they a bit apprehensive about incorporating the imagination?

LITT: No. Actually, they like it. Most of them find that the problem is the administration that they are dealing with. Administrators are usually very set in their ways and want you to follow a set program. At most, they try to slip in creativity within limits. Also, the teachers who work with high school students find it difficult to work with the imagination. Number one, because they have very large groups. Number two, the kids are not nearly so open to it. But the teachers are. Right now, I'm giving a somewhat dry course—basic theory. Graduate students and I talk about what grammar translation is, what ALM is, that sort of thing. And what these students are finding out is that they really have the desire to open up and be creative and use their imagination. But when I give them an assignment and it has to be done within the framework of grammar translation or ALM, they can't do it and they get very frustrated because they do want to bring in more creativity.

Last semester, I taught "Advanced Methods," which is a very hands-on course where they had to do a project across the curriculum in groups. So what they did was take, say, native American Indians. There were six people in each group. One of the students was a librarian who chose to work with Indian art. She

actually got her class to make a totem pole out of paper. It was fabulous. One was a home-economics teacher who did a lesson on Native American cooking. She brought in and arranged on a table many different types of corn; she baked corn muffins and made popcorn for everyone to eat so that they would have the sensation of totally different foods. She also related this to the different meanings of words like "ground" in "ground corn" and the ground you walk on.

Others prepared lessons in social sciences, language arts, reading—all on the American Indian. And they all were so creative! I was upset because I had not realized what they were doing and did not arrange to get pictures of it. One thing that I think is happening is that many teachers are realizing that the Natural Approach has allowed them to use their imagination. The problem is that if you have a supervisor that does not understand, it becomes far more difficult. That's where the problem often is. Luckily that's not a problem I have here. Many years ago, I had a principal who after observing me said, "You should have more pencil-pushing activities." He didn't understand that language is not learned on a piece of paper. Generally, I believe that teaching techniques that employ the imagination are coming to be more and more widely used—at least in the elementary schools. An excellent trend, if you ask me.

Using Humor in the Classroom

Dr. M. Jerry Weiss, a Distinguished Service Professor of Communications at Jersey City State College, has written widely in a number of fields, including education, humor, children's literature, and reading. He has been a visiting professor at universities scattered around the USA, and is a consultant to school systems in six states.

by M. Jerry Weiss

When students are queried about the characteristics of a teacher they most appreciate, they often reply "a sense of humor" and "the ability to communicate knowledge in an interesting way." Using humor in class can be helpful in preparing students for the formal study of humor as an important genre of literature. Professionals in the fields of medicine, psychiatry and psychology often state that laughter is a safety valve for sanity. It relieves stress and tension and helps people to be mentally healthy. When one laughs, a person uses parts of the human anatomy that are not used in any other physical or mental activity. Laughter has curative qualities that have amazed medical science. (Read *Anatomy of an Illness* by Norman Cousins.)

To analyze humor or comedy is futile. This important and special literary genre is "word play." Having fun with language develops critical thinking skills and helps readers and writers to expand their means of communication. So it is helpful to begin with a series of activities that involve students in language usage.

One activity a teacher can use is "Riddle, Riddle." The teacher copies two or three riddles, each on a separate piece of oaktag. For example: (1) What is smooth, yellow and deadly? (2) How did the computer die? (3) What cat wars a mask, a cape, and weighs 500 pounds?

Under each riddle place a paper bag. As students enter the room each day, they are encouraged to read each riddle and to write their answers on pieces of papers and to drop them into the appropriate paper bag. Students can answer each riddle as often as they want. They need not put their names on their answers.

On Friday the teacher empties each bag and types up copies of all of the answers for each riddle. There may be several correct responses. It is important that each answer is a complete response to the riddle; e.g., "smooth," "yellow," "deadly." (A "banana" or a "banana peel" is not a complete answer: the response does not include the element of "deadly.") This activity involves students in noting details. For good sources of riddles, check the numerous volumes of wonderful riddles by Mike Thaler, "The Riddle King." Ann Bishop and Alvin Schwartz have also compiled several books containing riddles.

Students can be encouraged to bring in riddles, and a teacher can take the best from each student, type these on a ditto stencil, and produce a "Riddle Newsletter." (Make sure the person's name is placed by each entry submitted by him or her.)

Today there are so many wonderful books to share with students. These might be read aloud by the teacher or by students. By using a variety of books, the reader can focus on word play (Amelia Bedelia books, for example), fractured fairy tales (*The True Story of The Three Pigs as Told by A. Wolf* by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, or their latest, *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, both available from Viking), cartoon books (Charlie Brown by Charles Schulz), and funny stories (*The Teacher from the Black Lagoon* by Mike Thaler, available from Scholastic; *Eppie M. Says...* by Olivier Dunrea, published by Macmillan.

Also of interest are *Four Dollars and Fifty Cents* by Eric A. Kimmel and Glen Rounds, Holiday House); *The Feather Merchants & Other Tales of the Fools of Chelm* by Steve Sanfield and Mikhail Magaril, Orchard Books; *Max in Hollywood, Baby* by Maira Kalman, Viking; Robert Quackenbush's *Treasury of Humor*, Doubleday; *Alpha and the Dirty Baby* by Brock Cole, Farrar Straus Giroux; *The Laugh Book; A New Treasury of Humor for Children*, compiled by Joanna Cole and Stephanie Calmenson, with drawings by Marylin Hafner, Doubleday; *The Wrong Side of the Bed*, by Wallace E. Keller, Children's Universe/Rizzoli; *Foolish Rabbits's Big Mistake* by Rafe Martin and Ed Young, Putnam; *The Cows are Going to Paris* by David Kirby and Allen Woodman with illustrations by Chris Demarist, Boyds Mills Press; *The Bed Who Ran Away from Home* by Dan Greenburg and John Wallner, Harper Collins;

Hildegard Sings by Thomas Wharton, Farrar Straus Giroux; *Six* by Seuss, Random House.

Music is another wonderful art form for introducing students to merriment. There are wonderful recordings of such fun songs as "Mairzy Doats," "Kids," "Mama Don't Allow," "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain," and "Day-O." The teacher can make song sheets for the class, and reading/singing the lyrics is an integration of music into the language arts class.

The study of song lyrics is a natural introduction to poetry. In recent years publishers have produced wonderful books of poems. Some good examples for use in a humor-centered program are: *Nonstop Nonsense* by Margaret Mahy, Dell Yearling; *Barley Barley* by Barrie Wade, Oxford; *The Hopeful Trout and Other Limericks* by John Ciardi; *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein, Harper; *Strawberry Poems*, edited by Adrian Mitchell, Delacorte; *When I Dance* by James Berry, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; *For Laughing Out Loud: Poems to Tickle Your Funnybone*, edited by Jack Prelutsky, Knopf; *My Head Is Read and Other Riddle Rhymes*, by Myra Cohn Livingston, Holiday House; *Soap Soup and other Verses* by Karla Kuskin, Harper Collins; *I Saw Esau*, edited by Iona and Peter Opie, with illustrations by Maurice Sendak, Candlewick Press; *The Baby Uggs Are Hatching* by Jack Prelutsky, Mulberry Books; *If You're Not Here, Please Raise Your Hand: Poems About School* by Kalli Dakos, Four Winds Press; *Fresh Brats*, by X. J. Kennedy, McElderry Books; *What's On The Menu? Food Poems*, edited by Bobbye S. Goldstein, Viking; *Itsy-Bitsy Beasties: Poems from Around the World*, edited by Michael Rosen, Carolrhoda; *The Adventures of Isabel*, by Ogden Nash, Joy Street/Little, Brown; *If I Were In Charge of The World*, by Judith Viorst, Atheneum.

Now a teacher can have the students write all kinds of funny poems. This is the beginning of the class humor literary magazine. Students who want can illustrate their own and/or classmates' poems. Some students who play musical instruments might set certain original poems to music. Then the teacher can introduce the students to the Broadway hit *CATS*.

"Putting on a Show" is a natural way to develop cooperative activities and foster positive self-esteem. Students might choose from structured skits involving funny activities, or doing a Readers' Theatre presentation based on an Amelia Bedelia story. A contest game show might focus on "Concentration" or "Match." Another group might sing songs from Broadway shows, such as "Tomorrow" from *Annie*, "Getting to Know you" from *The King and I*, "Put on a Happy Face," from *My Fair Lady*, "Let Me Entertain You" from *Gypsy*, and "Ease On Down the Road" from *The Wiz*.

Other students might be clowns, jugglers, perform musical numbers, demonstrate pantomime, present a puppet show, or do a make-up demonstration. Some students might do technical work, such as make a backdrop or a set, provide lighting effects, work on costumes, round up helpful props. Several students might design a program and serve as ushers if other classes are invited to see the show. Crown off the theatrical presentation with an evening production for parents, other relatives and friends.

Another approach might be through American folk tales. Steven Kellogg has done several books on American folk heroes, including *Pecos Bill* and *Paul Bunyon*, published by Morrow. Gross exaggertion is a major ingredient in such stories. A prize-winning video collection, "The American Folklore Series," is available through BFA/Phoenix productions in New York City. This series consists of ten illustrated, voice-over stories about such popular heroes as Paul Bunyon, John Henry, Glooskap, and Johnny Appleseed, each narrated by a voice so in tune with the region of the country, including one from Canada and one from Mexico.

Just a couple of stories from Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* will provide many suggestions for storytelling or creative writing. Students can have fun explaining such phenomena as "Why Fire Engines Are Red," or "Why Chickens Have Feathers." Anything goes. Teachers have lots of laughs as students come in with all kinds of absurd answers. These tales can also be added to the humor magazine.

Some teachers have even had students create new folk heroes and heroines. One teacher even had students select characters from stories and had a contest in which the students voted on the characters to be in the classroom Literary Hall of fame. Such characters included Winnie-the-Pooh, Paddington Bear, Kermit, Miss Piggy, Arthur (created by Marc Brown,) The Stupids (created by James Marshall).

One week might be devoted to films and television. Students might discuss what their favorite television comedy programs are, including cartoons. Teachers should be prepared for anything, including "Roseanne," "Alf," and even "Saturday Night Live." Movie comedy might focus on Abbott and Costello, Laurel and Hardy, Whoopi Goldberg, Robin Williams, and Disney animations.

A final activity might focus on a small-group activity. Each group is to come up with a new comedy feature. One group might develop a new comic strip; another group might come up with a good idea for a new comedy on television; another group might write a funny story or a set of stories.

One fifth grade student in Nevada came up with the following story:

> Once upon a time, Queen Peach looked into the mirror and asked, "Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is the most beautiful peach of all? "
>
> The mirror replied, "Snow Peach." Queen Peach was so angry, she called, "Green Peach! Green Peach!" She told Green Peach to take Snow Peach into the woods, kill her, and bring back her pit to prove she is dead.
>
> Green Peach took Snow Peach into the woods, and she was so pretty, Green Peach said, "Run, Snow Peach, you are so beautiful, and I can't kill you." Snow Peach ran far away. She had to get a job. She became a shoemaker. That's how we got the first peach cobbler.

Imagination Really Means Freedom

Dominic Pietrosimone teaches at Jersey City State College, and at City College and Hostos Community College, both of which are parts of the City University of New York. A doctoral candidate at New York University, he has taught in Saudi Arabia, Greece and Japan, and is particularly interested in teacher training.

An Interview with Dominic Pietrosimone

JILL: I understand that you've been up to something that involves students turning out a massive amount of writing. Let's start there.

PIETROSIMONE: You're talking about my entry level class at City College where the students write 10,000 words in a semester.

JILL: Is this entirely autobiographical, in response to readings or what?

PIETROSIMONE: Both and other types of writing as well. First of all, the sessions are conducted as a workshop as opposed to a class. Students are on two tracks: first, their own projects, which are largely but not solely autobiographical. For example, one of the students is writing this serial about a man who left illegally from the Dominican Republic, went to Puerto Rico and then came into the mainland U.S. Each chapter is about his travails, his problems of leaving for a better life to support his family. It's a cliff-hanger.

I asked the student to tell me about the character. She said, "Well, I heard a story about him—just one story—and I built up the whole scenario." She's written twelve chapters from her imagination, totally from her imagination.

JILL: So it's not autobiographical.

PIETROSIMONE: No, absolutely not. It's not autobiographical, it's not even reporting—it's fiction. Along similar lines, another student wrote about a neighbor of his in Siberia who left Moscow because her husband was imprisoned as a "refusenik," a political dissident She went to live in this god-forsaken town to be near him. The student literally transports us through all of the problems that she encountered. Now, that wasn't totally imagination, but he did have to get inside of her to present her point of view, and that represents a wonderful, imaginative leap. I generally leave that sort of thing up to the students—when they are ready to leave the egocentric point of view and really leap, they have the carte blanche to do it. I encourage it, but I don't require it because it really should be natural, something they're comfortable with. And eventually, they do leave themselves and go into all sorts of areas, many of which are quite imaginative. Once they feel free—like a child who always starts from within himself—they can start to take on the role of the "other." That is what my dissertation is on—writing from multiple perspectives.

JILL: When the young man wrote in the personna of the woman, did he use the first person, "I"?

PIETROSIMONE: Yes. He became the woman. Now in my class here at Jersey City State College, the students have been writing basically from their own point of view. But once they have a sense of fluency, they can go beyond themselves—once they've got the notion that their writing is comfortable enough for them to make the leap.

JILL: Maybe you can comment on this situation I encountered. The student could express herself fairly well in spoken English, but when it came to writing, she hit a stone wall, translating directly from Chinese and making a mess.

PIETROSIMONE: That's very interesting. Usually, Asian students tend to defer to others in whole-class discussions. What may be happening when she wrote was she focused on form or correctness and not on communicating, which she was doing when she spoke.

Speaking of Asian students, I did a study of metaphors used by students at the beginning level and at the advanced level. We think metaphors indicate degrees of fluency. At the entry level, I have found that Chinese students come up with all sorts of metaphors, possibly because theirs is a pictorial language and it's natural for them to use lovely images in their writing.

JILL: But will the images work in their writing?
PIETROSIMONE: Sometimes. Sometimes they're just too direct a translation.
JILL: Does your technique help shy students assume a voice?
PIETROSIMONE: In terms of writing, yes. At the beginning, I used to try to suggest topics as we read texts, such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I would ask questions like "Did anything like this happen to any of you?" But I let go of this because I found that I was setting the agenda. I no longer do that; instead, I bring in past portfolios of students' work, pass them around the first couple of days, and I say, "Go ahead and 'steal' any topic you like." After that, I just stay away and don't suggest any more topics. They come to me and I say, "I'm sorry but it's your autobiography and not mine." What students write about has to be felt, to come from inside themselves.

"I write perfect paragraphs. My sentences are correct. But I say nothing." I forget who said that but it's true. That's why I ask them to find stories that they would like to share. They don't have to be true. If they are, the students can still embellish. "You're not writing just for me," I point out. "You're writing for yourself. You have something there to say, something that is important to you. Your fellow students will read it first and then I'll read it. I'm secondary. Your fellow students are primary." Sometimes, I have the students write as characters from one text to characters in another text. That's pure imagination. And that's toward the end of the semester because by then they have a sense of themselves.
JILL: The move out of themselves—is that initiated by you, by themselves or what?
PIETROSIMONE: Ultimately, by themselves, when they're ready.
JILL: In your graduate course work, how often have you heard a mention of the faculty of the imagination or anything along those lines?
PIETROSIMONE: With the exception of one or two courses, it really wasn't dealt with that much. Basically, graduate study is responding to scholarly, education texts, where there really isn't much opportunity to respond to the imagination. In a course I'm taking now, "Literature of the Arts," we examine a work of art and look at it from a particular critic's point of view—that requires a certain amount of imagination because you have to make a leap.
JILL: What about courses in pedagogy?
PIETROSIMONE: Very little. The only course in which it was suggested was one by Prof. Perkinson who teaches courses in the history of education. The course I took was "Major 20th Century Educational Thinkers" and what we would do is read books by Dewey, Montessori, and the like. Perkinson said that we might be interested in carrying on a dialogue between the author and ourselves, which I think is an imaginative approach. But I don't think that anyone did do that. We wrote from a third point, not in the dialogic form.
JILL: You did take courses in methodology—how to teach ESL?
PIETROSIMONE: I don't remember anything particularly related to the imagination. I can guess why.
JILL: Well, why? I recognize it as a quite valuable stimulous resulting in some sort of brain state that enhances language acquisition. So do you, judging from the things you said about writing. Lots of people endorse that notion, yet why isn't it brought up more in the academy? I have an idea about why, but let's hear your observations.
PIETROSIMONE: We don't hear about it so much because we're still in that trap of writing academically, which means writing "seriously" and not giving credit to the imagination. It's acknowledged in the literature, but it wasn't focused on that much in the classes that I've taken.
JILL: As a result of that, it doesn't go on in a lot of classes taught by he students who have graduated.
PIETROSIMONE: You teach more the way you were taught than by the way you were taught to teach. Does that make sense? Unless you take the initiative yourself, it's very difficult to go out and do this.
JILL: You have taken the initiative.
PIETROSIMONE: Yes, because I'm a rebel at heart and I usually try to look at things in a different way and make my classes interesting. And the only way I can do that is to make them unpredictable. I don't want to know beforehand what's going to happen because then it's dull. I like to go in with a sense of

"Surprise me; let's take risks; let's see what you're going to create; let's come out differently than when we went in; I want to learn from you; let's try things." But I'm a risk taker. It's a little dangerous—you have to be willing to fall on your face.

JILL: Otherwise, you go in with a list of two-word idioms and say "Repeat after me."

PIETROSIMONE: Totally controlled. And that's not real teaching, in my opinion.

JILL: You're well on your way to a doctorate. If you had to teach a course in methodology, what would you talk about?

PIETROSIMONE: I would talk about this idea of letting students explore themselves and grow and not set an agenda in which it would be teacher controlled. Students always have a story to tell—let them tell it the way they want—in fiction, biography, and what have you. Let them—not you—set the agenda, because language learning itself is basically learning with one's peers. The teacher is there only when he or she is called on. The imagination can be central to this process.

Dominic Pietrosimone (center) reviews a writing assignment with his students at Jersey City State College.

JILL: Have you encountered anything related to this in research that might be called neurolinguistic or psycholinguistic? For example, what constitutes the imagination?

PIETROSIMONE: Gardner in his book *Frames of Mind* writes about a biological basis for specialized intelligences, but he doesn't mention imagination, as far as I remember.

JILL: Parapsychology is looked at dubiously by many scholars. Yet there seems to have been more research in the paranormal than in the relationship between the imagination and language acquisition.

PIETROSIMONE: Maybe it's not considered scholarly. And I think that's a trap. I just finished reading Dianne Larsen and Michael Long's *Introduction to Second Language Acquisition*—a wonderful text—and the upshot of this discussion is that there are more questions now than ever before. Before, we had all of the solutions, all of the various fads. These authors say no, there are too many factors that really cannot be controlled. Language learning is still something mysterious. We've come a long way in the 20-25 years since second language acquisition started receiving a lot of attention. There're no more set answers but a lot of questions. Which is good for us because we can explore, we can use our imaginations.

JILL: How about paintings—do you use them in your classes?

PIETROSIMONE: I don't now. I've used the book called *The Mind's Eye* in some of my classes to stimulate writing. But the use of paintings in going from one form to another is good, as is music to explore writing.

JILL: At what point in your career did you become aware that activities related to the imagination are fruitful?

PIETROSIMONE: I've been part of the federally funded [FIPSE] program at City College. There're two people there—Elizabeth Rorschach and Adele MacGowan—who were responsible for this fine grant. We have had a lot of sessions exploring topics such as "Vygotsky and the Zone of Proximal Development" in which we talked about helping the student extend himself or herself. We've done a lot of exploring, much with ourselves as learners and not just as teachers, and keeping journals and logs on how the students are learning and how we are teaching and observing. That's been an important part of my growth, and they're the ones who introduced me to this autobiographical project. We follow the "Fluency, Clarity and Correctness" approach. John Mayher in *Uncommon Sense* refers to that sequence. The individual teachers themselves have different emphases. For example, one brought in *Hamlet* and showed different versions of the film and commented on the ways i could be explored. There's a good example of the use of the imagination.

Another lesson with an imagination component was one concerned with micro-ethnographic studies that I described with my co-presenter, Gail Verdi, at a recent conference. Students had to choose a small

population, gain entry by interviewing them, do some research and put a short paper together. Now there was imagination here. For example, one student wanted to look at subway riders and see if he could determine the day of the week by the kind of readings they did. He would go into the same car every Monday and Friday for three weeks and look at the kind of reading the passengers were engaged in—newspapers versus novel versus magazine. That's imaginative. He thought of the project himself.

A hispanic student was very much interested in why two of his high school teachers chose to teach at high school levels because they had their doctorates and could have taught in college. So he interviewed them. The answer was that these teachers felt they needed to be models for the hispanic young men and women in their classes. Another student wanted to know about gay life because this is taboo in his country. So he interviewed people in the gay student union at City College, did some research in the library and came out with an insightful paper. A Russian student was interested in this Chinese take-out restaurant where he and his wife would stop in for a quick dinner. So he interviewed them: here was a Russian student interviewing a Chinese in English. These are marvellous examples of students doing things in their own areas of interest with us just staying out of the way.

JILL: Where does critical thinking fit in such an activity?

PIETROSIMONE: Critical thinking is there because they have to go to the library and see what the literature says on the subject, and then compare the literature with their own analysis and come up with their own conclusions.

JILL: Some of these projects seem to be just a little more along the lines of analysis than imagination.

PIETROSIMONE: Yes and no. It depends on how much we restrict our definition of the imagination.

JILL: As we move more and more toward analysis, towards critical thinking—and the value of that is rock solid in my opinion—do you think we are getting into an area that we need to complement consciously by introducing things like creative writing and the arts in general? By looking for relationships that are not not discovered by analytical modes but rather by intuitive, holistic modes? For example, having the students study photographs of people and imagine what went on in the scene before and after the photo was snapped?

PIETROSIMONE: I have tried that.

JILL: How do such activities promote language?

PIETROSIMONE: It frees them from being totally reader bound and shows them that language is really inside of you. Given the opportunity to free yourself, it will come out. You have a world inside of you that if called forth, can emerge in artistic forms like poetry.

JILL: It certainly has been pointed out before that writing is an essential part of thinking. Personally, I think that that is very much true. I come out with a sentence and study it as an objective entity and see what is implied in some of the relationships within that sentence. Often, this process suggests a direction that I would not have seen without the articulation in the first sentence.

PIETROSIMONE: Writing is a means of exploration. You do not know when you start out where you will wind up. Sometimes, I tell my students not to worry about where they are going but to let the story lead them. And they should feel free to add incidents and other embellishments. If such and such had happened, where would they be? This principle of exploration has applications at all levels. For instance, one Nobel Prize-winning physicist commented that as he was lecturing, he came up with a new angle on a problem he had been working on. Any class worth its salt should be an exploration on everyone's part, including the instructor. It is sometimes possible to get a class cooking in a way that generates an incredible amount of energy, so that everyone is exhausted when its over. You can't do that every time, but you can try...and hope.

JILL: That's a good point you made about very good ideas coming out of this kind of encounter.

PIETROSIMONE: Because you're exploring. If I had known beforehand what kind of questions you were going to ask, I would have gone through my mind and rehearsed, and it would have been deadly.

JILL: I seem to associate many of the techniques you've been mentioning with young children.

PIETROSIMONE: That's no accident. Some of our work at the university has grown out of activities

started at the elementary school level. Unfortunately, the imagination is pretty much squelched, as early as the second grade. That, to me, is a crime, because when you squelch the imagination, you make students become automatons, walking through their classes. I think that's very sad. And it continues right on into the university of course. If we could have the sense of wonder that a child has, it would be wonderful—no pun intended. But too many people who don't feel very sure of themselves would feel endangered. When they cannot control everything, when there is a chance that they will not know the answer, they are deathly afraid of losing face. This is a problem in Japan, where I taught. It's unfortunate, because students work lockstep, with no sense of imagination or discovery. But it also happens here. We have to feel pretty sure of ourselves as instructors. We have to let go and not hold on. The class is what is important and not me. As teacher, I'm in charge, but I'm not the focus. The students are the focus. Let them go in the directions they need to go to learn.

JILL: Well put. Again, why isn't that a main emphasis in TESL graduate programs?

PIETROSIMONE: As I said, we teach the way we're taught, and most of us are taught in this very linear, controlled, supposedly academic fashion. Carl Rogers talks about it in his book *Freedom to Learn*. I'm saying what he said in his book. There's literature on the subject. But most people are not really ready for this. Rogers mentions a number of most interesting experiments that were conducted in various schools and then they were closed by administrations that wanted very much to be in control—top-down power. People in power want to keep their power. And do they really have the learners' good at heart? No. Imagination can go a whole multitude of ways. If you want to control, then you don't dare use imagination.

JILL: That's ironic because if you do use the imagination, you will never be expected to control. It ceases to be an issue.

PIETROSIMONE: Yeah, imagination really means freedom.

JILL: That really is a fine note to end on.

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Reading Aloud: Children's Literature in College ESL Classes

by Susan C. Khodabakhshi and Denise C. Lagos

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Dr. Denise C. Lagos is Associate Professor of ESL, Reading and English at Union County College in Cranford, New Jersey. In addition to a doctorate in Language Education, she holds an M.A. in Reading from Rutgers University and an M.A.T. in ESL from Montclair State College in New Jersey. Her research interests include ethnography and the use of chidren's literature in the college classroom.

Teachers looking for a way to improve their ESL students' reading and listening skills as well as to stimulate their speaking and writing abilities should consider reading children's literature aloud to them. Such reading, particularly the sharing of children's literature with students at the college level, can increase students' motivation to speak, read and write. They acquire valuable background knowledge, learn to make predictions, hear correct pronunciation, and acquire vocabulary. At the same time the students reexamine their own experiences through the medium of powerful, meaningful stories, making connections to their own as well as their classmates' lives and to the human truths embodied in children's classics. Children's literature bridges the cultural and ethnic gaps in the backgrounds of ESL students by conveying universal themes to which these students can relate.

Regardless of the primary focus of the lesson, reading aloud is productive because it interconnects the four language components: listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, when using chidren's literature with secondary and college ESL students, choice of material is an important consideration. A typical class often consists of students with varying cultural and educational backgrounds, prior knowledge, and levels of reading and writing proficiency. The right material can be appealing to and effective with ESL students because the simplified structures and universal themes are perceived differently at various age levels.

Selection criteria should include:

- Interest-provoking titles
- Simple structure with a strong, meaningful theme
- Fresh and challenging vocabulary
- Creative and vivid illustrations
- Irreverent, rebellious stories with a twist

One author whose stories meet these criteria is Shel Silverstein. Although he is known for his children's books, his work has great appeal for older readers. His unique writing style touches readers of all ages. Three of his stories—"The Missing Piece," "The Giving Tree," and "Lafcadio the Lion Who Shot Back"— are especially appropriate to read aloud to secondary and college ESL students. These students particularly enjoy such stories from which they are able to draw analogies and apply them to their own lives. We have used these stories in ESL classes and received much positive feedback from the students. In responding to "The Giving Tree," students usually interpret the tree as symbolic of a parent sacrificing for a child, of friendship, or of maturity versus immaturity. They invariably discuss personal experiences which they relate to this theme. An example of such a response is the following written by Santiago, a student from the Dominican Republic:

> While listening to this story, "The Giving Tree", I began to wonder how it applies to my life. Several years back, I met someone who became a close friend. We spent much of our time together. We spent long hours talking and discussing our goals and future careers. As time passed, I realized that my friend was becoming dependent on me. He only came to me when he needed something from me. We no longer shared an equal partnership; I was now the giver, and he was the taker. Because of this situation, our friendship began to fall apart.
>
> From this experience, I've learned that in dealing with friends, one can't be too giving or too dependent. There should be enough space for each person to mature while remaining close to his friend.

Santiago was able to identify with the theme of "The Giving Tree" and grasp the symbolism involved. His interpretation of the story prompted him to reflect on the concept of friendship, which he used as the subject of a short essay. This followed a class discussion of the story after it was read aloud. In a composition or reading class, "The Giving Tree" can be used to introduce more complicated material. For example, an instructor can have students compare the concept of friendship in "The Giving Tree" with essays from college level English textbooks, such as Judith Viorst's "Friends, Good Friends, Such Good Friends" or Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux's "On Friendship" (in Spack, 1990). In a reading class, a discussion of "The Giving Tree" can give students an opportunity to activate relevant background knowledge before reading more complex material.

"The Missing Piece" is another story that is appropriate to use in preparation for more difficult material. It appeals to ESL students on various levels. Some see the theme as applicable to international affairs: the search for the missing piece representing conflicts among countries. Others relate the story to the individual's search for the perfect mate, the perfect job, or the perfect country. The following journal entry by Luis, an Ecuadorean student, shows an adult ESL learner's associations with themes from "The Missing Piece."

> In the beginning while I was analyzing "The Missing Piece" some ideas came into my mind. One of them was the relationship of the missing piece with the missing peace that exists between some countries in the world. Countries that are in conflict have to find that missing peace which some day will bring quiet, peace and freedom from anxiety.

In a subsequent entry, Luis writes about his personal identification with the theme:

> I'm always looking for peace and quiet in my life. However, it seems impossible to find this missing piece no matter where I go and who I live with. So here I go looking for my missing piece that I hope to find some day. I will be happy afterwards but not really happy because there will always exist that missing piece. "Oh, I'm looking for my missing piece, I'm looking for my missing piece, hi dee ho, here I go, looking for my missing piece."

In addition to clearly showing how he can relate to the theme of the story, Luis feels free enough to experiment with Silverstein's playful writing style. The simplicity and humor of such stories can be used to help students overcome preoccupation with grammatical correctness in their writing, which often hinders the development of content. Reluctant writers can be given assignments that ask them to write their own playful children's stories. Such assignments are most successful when done in groups that give students the opportunity to brainstorm and roleplay.

The simplicity of children's literature makes it easily understandable and accessible for adult ESL students. An example of a very simple yet beautifully crafted story that ESL students have enjoyed is "The Red Balloon" by Lamorisse (1956). A silent video version of the story is available and can be shown in addition to reading the book. We have experimented with the use of the video with different classes. Some sessions have seen the video first, while others have listened to the story before seeing the film. Those classes that view the film first have been more successful, probably because the initial viewing allows the students to use their creativity to imagine the plot, which they can then confirm or modify when they hear the story. Students express enjoyment and interest in predicting the story before they hear it read aloud.

In the following essay, Jose, a Portuguese student, uses "The Red Balloon" to introduce a personal narrative.

> In the story "The Red Balloon," the little boy becomes friends with a red balloon. I believe that the balloon symbolizes something special. For example, everyone has something that is special to them, no matter how insignificant it may seem to others. The boy loves the red balloon but other people do not see how special it is to him. When I was younger, I found a puppy on my way to school. The puppy was hurt and I took him home

with me so that I could make him better. However, when I got home my mother was not very excited about having another dog in the house. It took a lot of begging and crying, but I finally convinced her to let me keep it. However, I had to give up the dog as soon as it was better.

Time passed and the dog was finally healed, and it was time to give him up. I knew it was going to be very difficult because I had become friends with him. Even though I had two other dogs, this one was special to me because I found him and made him better. However, I had promised my mother that I would let him go and I did. The next day at our doorstep was the dog again! My Mom finally gave in and let me keep him.

I guess I was pretty lucky because my mother realized how special the dog was to me and how special I was to the dog. Unfortunately, most people do not understand how special something or someone can be to someone else. We all should realize that, if we can have something that means a lot to us, so can someone else.

As his essay illustrates, Jose was interested in and identified with the story of "The Red Balloon." His interpretation and personal reflection developed into a composition.

Dr. Denise C. Lagos (center) participates in a discussion with students in her class which has been divided into groups to compare reactions to children's literature.

Teaching Techniques

A typical lesson plan involves the following steps:

First, the students are provided with a considerable amount of background information about the author and his self-expressed aim to appeal to all readers. The information on the book jacket and in the introduction or preface is read aloud. This is important to avoid giving the students any impression that the material is directed only to children. The writing style of the author is also discussed. The story is then read aloud to the entire class, and the illustrations are shown to the students.

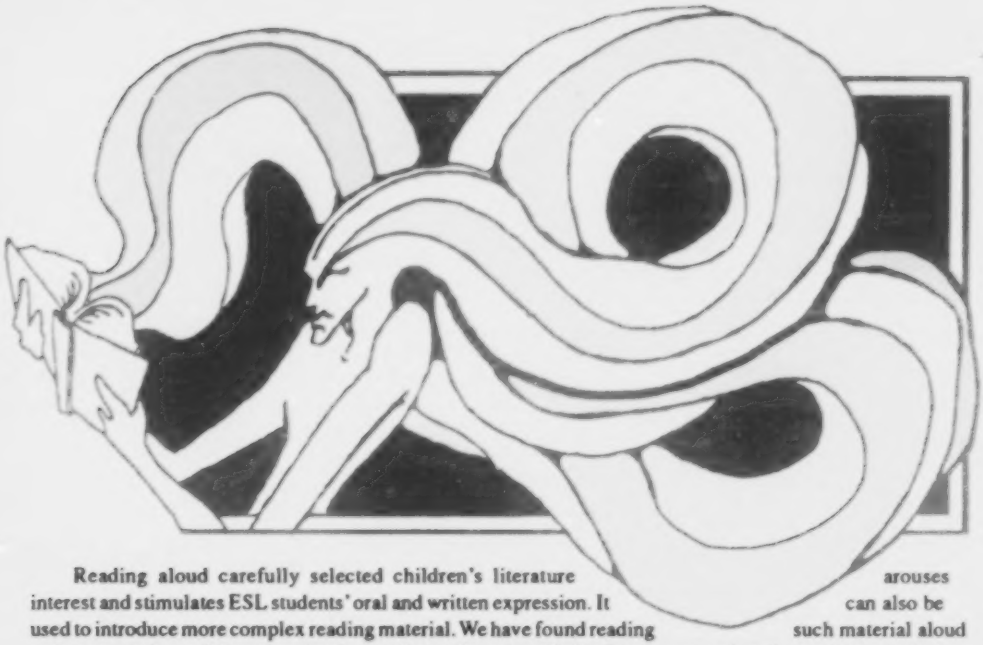
Next, the class is divided into groups of four or five and instructed to brainstorm, to discuss feelings they have before and after hearing the story. The time allotted for this activity varies according to the involvement of the groups; generally no longer than fifteen minutes is required. Following the small-group discussions, all members of the class come back together and share ideas generated in the groups. The instructor also participates in the discussion and exchange of ideas.

The final activity, a follow-up to the previous steps, is a writing assignment based on the story and discussions. For example, students might be asked to write a summary and reaction to the story, or to discuss their interpretation of the characters. We have used this format in many ESL classes and without fail, students have shown genuine interest and involvement.

Some have related the identity crisis of the lion in "Lafcadio the Lion Who Shot Back" to their own lives. Lafcadio didn't know whether he was a lion or a hunter. ESL students have seen the lion's dilemma as similar to their own feelings about acculturation. Many experience confusion over their cultural identity after living in the United States for a period of time and then returning to the native country for a visit. They may feel that they don't truly belong in either culture, similar to Lafcadio.

Another topic that ESL students have found interesting is comparing these children's books to children's literature from their native countries. Some students may have copies of children's books written in their native language which they can show to the class. They often find it enjoyable to give an oral presentation of the book, explaining the story in English and showing the illustrations.

Not long ago, Daniel, a former ESL student, returned to borrow a copy of *Super Dooper Jezebel*, which he had heard in a previous ESL class. He explained that he wanted to read it aloud to fulfill an oral presentation assignment in a credit-bearing communication class he was then taking. When he returned the book a couple of weeks later, he reported that his presentation had earned him an 'A'. He proudly described the enthusiastic reaction of his native English-speaking audience to the story about an insufferably perfect child who gets eaten by an alligator.



Reading aloud carefully selected children's literature arouses interest and stimulates ESL students' oral and written expression. It can also be used to introduce more complex reading material. We have found reading such material aloud to be extremely useful and productive, and equally enjoyable for instructors and students. Our premise is supported by Gwendolyn Jones (1990), a professional storyteller and Professor of Children's Literature and Storytelling. She applauds the current recognition of the value of children's literature in reading instruction. According to Jones, children's literature" is ALIVE and WELL and is not only an integral part of reading instruction but a vital part of the total realm of language and personal development."

References

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Spack, Ruth. (1990) *Guidelines*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Appendix

The following is a list of children's books that have proven successful in our community college ESL classes.

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Herriot, James. (1984). *Moses the Kitten*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
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Lamorisse, Albert. (1956). *The Red Balloon*. New York: Doubleday.
Numeroff, Laura Joffe. (1985). *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*. New York: Harper and Row.
Pack, Min. (1988). *Aekung's Dream*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press.
Parish, Peggy. "Amelia Bedelia" (series of books). New York: Avon Camelot.
Ross, Tony. (1988). *Super Dooper Jezebel*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
Silverstein, Shel. (1981). *A Light in the Attic*. New York: Harper and Row.
—. (1964). *The Giving Tree*. New York: Harper and Row.
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The Right to Be Creative

Dr. Walter Eliason is a teacher educator at Rider College in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, where he also conducts an ESL summer immersion institute. He has taught ESL in North Africa and in Latin America. His favorite color is blue; number, 11; and smell, orange.

An Interview with Walter Eliason

ELIASON: I have been thinking about imagination and language learning, and I find that it's a very basic concept. Anytime a person puts together two disparate things or pieces of information in focusing on some new item, that person is using imagination, and the result is to some degree or other creative. However, the result has to be novel, different, often personal and always unpredictable. If it is just rational and predictable, it doesn't demonstrate that spark of the imagination we'd like to see. Using our imagination seems to require us to connect things that are normally different. In general, in putting together colors to make new hues, as the impressionists did, we're doing something imaginative. That would even be true of making an apple pie...I'm not sure if the apple pie qualifies as a creative product but, in fact, if we add rhubarb or cranberries to the apples, we might be doing something slightly or moderately creative. So that the imagination is such a basic concept that it can be found in all thinking creatures, even in small children—maybe especially in small children as they play.

There's been a lot of study trying to define what creativity is and what creative people are like. Are creativity and imagination the same? Is it important to you to set up some parameters for imagination and if so can you tell me what they are?

JILL: Yes and no. It is important. A parameter is an analytical notion, and it is analysis that allows us to ask about the role of the imagination in the first place. However, establishing just what those particular parameters are is not my concern at the moment. I would agree that imagination involves synthesis—the putting of things together—while analysis involves taking things apart. Earl Stevick discusses this lucidly, coherently and in considerable depth in the keynote address he wrote for this year's Conference on the Imagination [published in this Journal].

For the present, I am content to work in terms of gutfeel and broad concepts with fuzzy edges. There is always the danger that clear articulations rooted in apparent logic will overwhelm valid perceptions rooted in intuition. I think that the seductive power of rhetoric and half-truths masquerading as a more substantial science has helped lead us to our present neglect of the virtues of the often-fragile imagination. That does indeed suggest itself when we consider some of the basic thrusts in language teaching theory during the past three decades. Analysis is too often king. "Get the classroom teacher to do research in which something gets quantified, and the train will be headed in the right direction." It might be pointed in the right direction, but the caboose seems to be off the track.

The very basis of the Conference on the Imagination at Jersey City State College and of my interest in getting a journal together is the lack of recognition of what seems to me a pretty simple observation: namely, that the imagination is critical to language learning, and should be focused on directly in ESL. It occurs to me fairly often—like every day—that this whole enterprise is embarrassingly obvious and should not need emphasizing. Yet I believe it does.

ELIASON: You're absolutely right. I think most of us want to be more imaginative teachers but just don't always know how. I give a workshop called "Creative Expression in the Foreign Language Classroom" in which I purposely do odd-ball things in order to encourage teachers to break the mold and try different things. They do many fun things, slightly outlandish things too. At the close, they are all pleased with the ideas, they enjoyed themselves, and all agree to the need to be more creative. However, creative activities are viewed as something we add to the structured curriculum where it takes a back seat, something on the back burner that offers no challenge to the main course.

NOTE: JILL: *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*

Lately I've been spending time in these worshops on personality types and learning styles trying to stress the differences among students and between teachers and students. I think this is a valid rationale for using learning tasks that challenge the imagination and engage students in a different way. We go through some activities for "creative" classrooms as a way for students to express themselves, to raise their self-value quotient, to get involved in classroom language learning.

When we do something creative, we seem to feel better about ourselves and the world, and we are likely to learn anything better. It may be that the learners' lack of finding some creative, expressive outlet is a block to his/her language achievement.

JILL: Do you think that the imagination is more relevant for some types of personality than others in terms of acquiring a second language?

ELIASON: Yes, I think so. It is a question of appropriate input. I would say that half the class would prefer to do something, operate on something, manipulate something, create something, consider things that relate to their lives interacting personally with the subject matter, and to use the second language to do it rather than learn language in a structured syllabus. In this case, language becomes a means for meaningful expression not an end.

Maybe you are familiar with the Myers-Brigs studies which are based on the work of Karl Jung. They devised a temperament sorter that assists us to understand ourselves and others in so far as we have preferences for one kind of behavior or another. As a result, we can describe the kind of personality type we have. Do we make decisions because we are extroverted, introverted, thinking or rational, intuitive, feelings-centered, empirical, judgmental, or open-ended in our thinking? While we all have these traits to one degree or another, the degree to which we have preferences, places us in one of 16 personality types.

The point is that there are many kinds of students in our classes, each a unique individual for sure, but each sharing a variety of personality traits and concomitant learning styles with the preferences of others. We can describe types of personalities we have in classrooms without engaging in stereotyping, and we can be considerate in the design of instruction to include activities that match these temperament styles to learning tasks.

In any case, if a teacher uses materials that engage the student in his/her own learning, then creative activities requiring the use of one's imagination should be high on the list of activities selected. These should assist significantly in second language acquisition.

Students come to the language classroom with their own agenda in terms of their personality types and concomitant learning styles. These aren't necessarily in accord with those of the teacher. Of course, everyone really wants to be creative, don't you agree, but it's more important—just for processing the information—to some than to others. When the teacher wants one kind of student behavior like one that calls for risk taking, then students who are more intuitive, less judgmental, seekers of relationships, comfortable in interactive situations etc. will process the input and respond with appropriate output more easily than other students who are more structured in their learning style, ambitious of being correct always, and inclined to work best in very small groups. On the other hand, teachers insisting on perfect language usage will be more effective with the latter students than with others. Nothing works for everyone all the time. It's just that some personality types are ignored in many classrooms.

JILL: The last time I was here, I watched you teach a class in creative expression. Now if you had found yourself teaching an ESL class, could you have transformed or changed this very interesting activity and used it to teach language?

ELIASON: In an ESL class, there are many ways we can set up activities that will require our students to use their imagination and speak from their personal experience. These activities include problem solving, information gap activities such as designing the perfect schedule, writing plays, dramatic reading, writing poems, changing story endings, sequencing pictures to make new story lines, doing hands-on experiments, using manipulatives or cuisinaire rods to construct things and then to discuss them, and so on.

In the class you observed, students were copying from a large painting and interpreting that painting. It took some quiet time but when it was over, the students had created another something special which

can easily serve as a basis for discussion, comparison, contrasting one interpretation to another, getting at the meaning and feeling behind the work. It isn't quite "language activated," in that creative instance until the copies have been completed. But, when it is language activated, it is meaningful. The activity is also preceded by a lot of talk about the techniques and materials to be used.

Yes, I do sometimes use this painting/coloring/drawing activity in ESL class. It is common practice in the lower grades, as you know, to draw an interpretation of what one has just read or conversely to write about what one has just drawn. With older students, I can't get the same spontaneity and so imitation is quicker, more satisfying, and less competitive: it yields a good deal of comment and a measure of excitement.

JILL: So they orally analyze drawings, paintings and whatever with each other and with the class? And this is an instance of the use of the visual arts in the language classroom.

Dr. Walter Eliason hangs up one of the semi-abstract works that his students interpret in drawings and paintings of their own in preparation for class discussion.

ELIASON: Sure, but it's an activity connected with the act of creating. It isn't only visual. We also visit museums. It's a chance to get out of the classroom and into the community, and for me that always includes museums. As we walk around together, I try to engage the students in conversations about what we're looking at. I find they are often silent in front of elaborate, realistic art but that they respond more easily to abstractions, things into which they can really project themselves. It is also a case in which a title or a hint from someone will trigger their imagination, and they will find something to say about what the abstraction represents or how it makes them feel. They are more likely to respond to a student painting like the one on the wall behind you than to something more realistic. If they can't figure out the meaning of the odd shapes and colors, they pick it up as soon as they see the title "Four Seasons." They enjoy smiling and shaking their heads and commenting when they come upon Pop Art. Maybe it's because they are not at a handicap to understand the scenes, and they can use the language they have in order to imaginatively make the connection to the images presented to them. In this case, it is essentially an output activity.

JILL: And all these people are studying English as a second language?

ELIASON: Yes. I guess it is teaching English in a content area, art. We regularly go to museums in Princeton, Trenton, Philadelphia and other places. We've also gone to the Franklin Institute which is science based. It's a chance for us to get out of the classroom and into the community, the real classroom. Also, many of the students are more interested in science than in art, and I have to adjust to that. At the Institue, they have a chance to connect their language to interesting displays. The displays make scientific knowledge observable, and the students have to connect to basic theories of physics and chemistry.

It isn't easy to get the right "cognitive" match. If the displays are beyond their levels of knowledge or experience, the students are quickly bored. Or if the displays are too simple, they are bored. When it's at their level of thinking, it provides an impetus for their expression in English and is far more valuable to some than a visit to the art museum. The ideas and the language to express them must be connected. If you understand a particular concept in your native language as to, say, the bouncing of ball-bearings on curved surfaces and what arches they will make before coming to rest in the center, and what these basic principles are, and if you have to use English to express these concepts, are you using imagination? It is connecting different bodies of knowledge, and God knows you have to give scientists credit for imaginative thinking. So I'm going to say it is.

JILL: Einstein once commented that imagination is one of the most valuable faculties in a scientist.

ELIASON: Otherwise, you're a technician.

JILL: This workshop on creative expression—is that the one you gave in South America?

ELIASON: Yes. But what I was trying to do there was to reach teachers who were working with little or no materials. There are lots or them, you know. In many places, students don't have their own textbooks, and some spend time laboriously copying a text into their "copy" books. I tried to show teachers how they could function without any book by developing their own techniques.

Just the other day, I was looking at a child's drawing of a pumpkin, and the child was only four years old. The drawing was creative, imaginative. And I don't see any reason for that not being an awfully good starting point. Give a person a sheet of paper and a paintbrush, and tell him or her to make a pumpkin and tell you about it. Why not? The teacher takes the student output, probably limited, and student output becomes the basis for teacher input and hopefully more learner output. It can work and it's based on the learner's creative activity.

Even without paper and paintbrushes, a teacher can do other things. Mime is fun and requires everyone's imagination. How about having a little basketball game. A teacher walks into a room bouncing an invisible basketball and then throws it out to one of the students gesturing for its return. Or, they simply pass the basketball around. It's a good opportunity to give commands and have students give commands to their peers. Now this is just listening and speaking repetition, but it can be taken to other language skills. You can begin with a lot of miming activities, but to do so you have to use your body, your eyes and hands in forming expressions; you have to develop your abilities to use many gestures and facial expressions to get ideas across and use language that goes with them like actors and actresses do. And teachers can do these things in pantomime.

JILL: I can imagine many ways to convert mime into overt language, but why don't you specify a couple.

ELIASON: Well I'd say you can insert words anywhere. "I'm throwing a white ball up and I'm catching it. I'm throwing a red ball up and Jose is catching it. Oops, I dropped it. I'll pick it up and put it in my pocket. I'll put the white ball in my shirt pocket...I need more practice." You can see how simple or complicated you can make it. You can then move to questions: "Am I picking it up? Am I dropping it? Am I picking it up or dropping it?" "You're _____." So what you've done is move from pantomime to what we can call audio-mime, like the direct method, and then to commands and questions. At this point it can become a TPR [total physical response]. After a good bit of this, you move to the chalkboard and the students take pencil and paper to write and read. Probably a lot of repetition and substitution work will be necessary and useful to learning. Perhaps substitution activities for phrases like "in my pocket." Just because it's creative or imaginative doesn't mean it doesn't need repeating for mastery.

Do you ever do calisthenics in class? My students like to do these, and in no time at all, one of the students leads them. To me, it would take the fun out of it to write the directions on the board. I'm content that the spoken words are learned in this case.

JILL: And what are some of the other media you suggest?

ELIASON: Well, the one's we've talked about so far seem to require a good deal of modeling before students are able to partcipate with language in an interactive way. There are many others, of course. I like developing stories out of pictures. Magazine covers are good for this. Just show a colorful photograph of a person and have the class talk about that person. This will require some modeling language as well at the beginning, but it is a useful technique at any level. It is also fun to reassemble pictures into a series of events. Students are focused on the action in the pictures, and then look for the language needed to retell the tale.

Once there is some language competence, let's say at the intermediate level, I like to do problem solving activities, once again because the material is created in the classroom and is dependent on those problems facing the students. Often the problem of one student is common to others in the group, and so many will contribute to the discussion. I like to start with an event, something that happened, and we describe it. Then I get a set of statements as to the sequence of events, identify possible alternatives to the problem, and make some suggestions for resolutions. This is clearly a group activity and follow-up activities are easy; a letter from each student to the person with the problem, a position paragraph on the issue, a full-class letter writing activity in response to someone involved in the problem, and other things that will suggest themselves.

JILL: I see. You're saying that what's behind language—the content that is to be expressed—is critical.

ELIASON: Right. The language teacher sets up activities which interest the learners and MOTIVATE THEM TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES. Without that, the bread is not going to rise. I've seen a motivating

activity last for years in some students. You have too, I'm sure. It is even possible that some short creative and motivational activity can spark an interest and influence a person's life interests and career. One never knows. So it's hard for me to dismiss an activity just because it is not totally language-active. You have to consider what it might mean to that group as it progresses through the rest of the semester or the year. Motivating them, encouraging them to feel good about themselves because they can express themselves artistically, is terribly important, especially considering that lots of language learners are part of an immigrant population. They come to us with enormous problems, and they often have difficulty feeling proud of themselves. A poor self-concept is often one of their biggest problems. If we can get them to be happier about themselves by getting them to be more creative, more involved with their own learning, then this will directly affect their language development, cognitive development and cultural adjustment.

JILL: I imagine that often takes an act of self-confidence on the part of the teacher also.

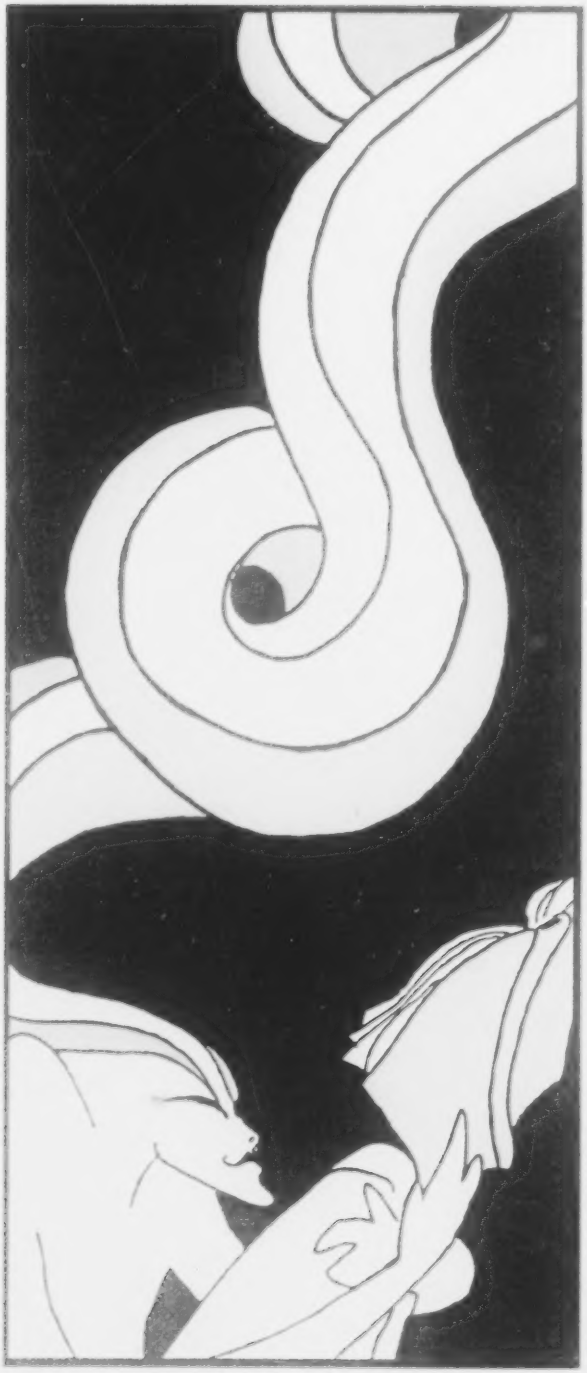
ELIASON: It's essential, isn't it. Teachers have to be certain that their most important task is to engage the student. While most of us know this, we still have to deal with curriculum guides, standardized testing, as well as administrators and other teachers who don't agree. And not only immigrants but also all people have a right and a NEED to be creative. And teachers have a responsibility therefore to provide activities that help people to develop their creativity in all kinds of ways—visual art, literature, drama. I'm embarrassed to say, I've even tried a mini-dancing class once. It didn't work out for me, not because it wasn't a good idea, but because I hadn't worked out the materials well enough, I guess. I have had quick luck with Andean music because the steps are so simple in tune with music. Using his synthesizer, Edward Tangere at Temple University has recorded some original rap useful in teaching ESL.

JILL: You mentioned drama. Were you referring to students putting on plays?

ELIASON: Yes, but I haven't done it for large audiences. In my classroom, I often use plays called "Action Plays." They were written back in the 60's for adolescents who had poor reading skills and couldn't handle *Ivanhoe* like the other kids. The dialogue is simple but natural and focused on the problems of young adults. I find that when they are assigned a role and have to practice and repeat their part often, they manage to deal with intonation and its meaning quite well. In addition, these playettes are open-ended and provide a basis for discussion and the design of our own endings.

For advanced intermediates, I've raided the English Department's materials and have assigned plays and parts, even three plays to the same class. At the end of a week's work, we can have a little drama festival in which the three short plays or scenes are presented to the whole class. By the way, all schools present plays or musicals during the year. Why not get the play in advance and read it in class in preparation for a theatre night out?

You know, Clyde, aiming for creative, imaginative classroom activities works two ways: it makes both learning and teaching a lot more rewarding.



The Puppet as a Metaphor

Dr. G. Tova Ackerman is the founder of Puppetry in Practice, a resource center for teacher training through the arts at Brooklyn College in New York City. Her work focuses on the development of literacy through collaborative projects linking college, school and community. Recent publications are Rush into English *(revised edition) and* Puppet Drama and the Whole Language Classroom.

By Tova Ackerman

Their world is a poem, not a short story.
They are, by their very nature, images coming to life.
When the puppet bridges the gap between his seeming
limitations and his coming to life,
He has made a moving comment on the human condition
And even the puppet's death can be moving,
As having given us the gift of his breath,
He then takes it back.
And yet, in the next moment, he lives again – immortal,
A dream or memory in the actor's hand.
The actor can play this role, too,
But the puppet is this.
He is naturally tragic-comic
Naturally abstract – a detail.
In the human world, he is a visitor
And we must see ourselves through his eyes.

(Bass, 1992)

Puppet drama, while it is a form of creative expression, differs from other performing arts in that the world designed by the puppeteer consists of animated objects—a theater performance whose actors are not human. The performance may parallel human reality, but the "actors" have much greater freedom. A puppet can be an inanimate object, a distortion or exaggeration of reality, or a being that can move in ways impossible for a human actor.

The actual puppet creation process may be quite simple. A few pieces of fabric, a bit of glue and glitter or a folded paper plate may be all that is needed. The interaction between person and character, however, is complex. The character that is created comes from some aspect of its creator that may not even be consciously expressed in everyday life.

The puppet, then, is put into the role of actor, mirror and critic. It has lines to speak, and its oral environment takes place within the context of other "actors" in a particular place and time set by the puppet producer. In much the same way that ordinary discourse takes place, the interaction between players on a puppet stage is always more than the words expressed. The puppets not only mouth words but transmit a message through body language and visual aspect. In contrast to human interaction, that of the puppet is an exaggeration, often a comic one, of some aspect of the character portrayed. It may be an abstract shape, an object, or a realistic figure, but it is always symbolic. A puppet is created with the audience in mind. Its body language is purposeful with no movement unintentioned. The mind of the puppeteer interacts with the audience with the freedom of anonymity and the urge to portray that which may normally not be portrayed. At the same time, the stimulation of the medium affects both the puppeteer and the audience.

Imagination and the Puppet

The word "imagination" is usually defined as the power of the mind to form a mental image or concept of something that is not real or present. In Hebrew, the word "imagination" is "dimyon" which means "to be similar to." If the two definitions are combined, in terms of puppet creation, the question then arises as to the origin of an "imaginary" puppet character. The answer lies in the basic nature of the pup-

pet as a metaphor. Puppets become visual metaphors for ideas, characters or emotions that may not have been consciously thought of as connected by the puppeteer until the puppet is made.

Once made, the puppet has an external look and an inner "anima" that is the gift of its builder. When Rudolf Arnheim (1974) speaks of artistic imagination, he speaks of it as "the capacity to invent a striking pattern, especially when applied to such familiar shapes as a head or a hand. Imagination is by no means primarily the invention of new subject matter, and not even the production of just any kind of new shape. Artistic imagination can be more nearly described as the finding of new form for old content, or—if the handy dichotomy of form and content is eschewed—as a fresh conception of an old subject" (p. 14).

Arnheim speaks further of the relationship between the artist and the object being portrayed. He speaks of the object as being able to dictate a bare minimum of structural features and therefore calling on the "imagination" of the artist in the literal sense of the word. It is the imagination of the artist that must turn the object into an image. In the case of puppetry, in which the object itself is the active voice, what does the artist/puppeteer do to embody it with spirit?

In an interview with Joseph Krofta, conducted by Hannah Kodicek (1992) for a BBC documentary of Czech puppetry, Krofta speaks of the animation of an object. "We need to remind ourselves often that the word, 'to animate' does not mean 'to make move', but rather it means 'to give soul to', from the Latin word 'anima'....To breathe soul into an object does not mean making a perfect copy of it....An artist makes us believe that any object he touches is alive, and 'en-souled', that is contains a living soul." The puppet may be the product of the imagination of the person who made it, but once created it exists in its own right. The relationship between puppet maker and puppet cannot be totally separate.

The Freedom of Puppets

"Puppets, though normally associated with gross buffoonery, are poetic. They are, because they are not human, immediately metaphors" (Bass, 1992, p.10). Puppetry, seen as metaphor, can be differentiated from other art forms: it has a zaniness and a style of oral communication that is at once strongly visual and persuasive in terms of involving the spectator. A puppet is made to speak. Whether or not the mouth has a movement mechanism or is glued shut or painted on, whether the puppet is symbolic or abstract in shape and design, it has a function that involves communication. This aspect of puppetry is intrinsic. When a particular puppet character comes to mind, there is often a slight twitch in the hand. If a puppet is put on one's hand, it is impossible to keep it quiet. It has a mind of its own. If it wants to interrupt, it does. Its personality comes from some part of the puppeteer that is dominant enough for it to have been created as a concrete visualization. It is a statement of thoughts that may not have been consciously expressed: here, those thoughts are not only stated but stated strongly. This aspect of puppetry makes it a dynamic tool for developing language communication skills with both children and adults. A puppet is an extension of the personality, but it has greater freedom to express this personality. It can go where the person is afraid to go; it can speak with mistakes without worry. It can fly. It can sing.

Magical Interactions

Whether the puppet is realistic, abstract, or a functional object used as an animated object, its role is to make a statement. It is given life through the movement of the puppeteer and is used to entertain or to present the viewpoint of the puppeteer to others. It exists through interaction with an audience, and only the imagination of the spectators give it life. "Further, and perhaps more important, there is the almost magical interaction of puppets and puppeteer. Never get the idea that the puppet stands independently between the audience and his manipulator. The puppeteer can feel the response of the audience through this extension, this part of himself, as much as the actor on a stage" (Baird, 1973, p. 17).

In a theater project focusing on animated objects at the Sao Paulo University Department of Theater, Ana Maria Amaral worked with object theater in terms of the sensorial and mystic aspects of the object. In terms of the first project, the object was viewed first within its natural environment and later, away from it. Away from its natural environment, it appeared autonymous, if somewhat odd. The next step was to work with the object as animated and magical. The infusion of a magical or supernatural element into

non-living objects is not new in human history. Part of the belief system of primitive man is that there is a live being within both animate and inanimate things. In terms of the puppeteer, the relationship between the object and the life it develops through animation is akin to the relationship between the concrete idea and the abstraction. The additional element that is native to puppet drama is the strong psychological connection between the animated object and the puppeteer.

The Puppet Is Oral

The basic nature of the puppet is oral; its orality differentiates it from other art forms such as sculptural objects or dolls. However, the natural zaniness of this inherently performance-based media, allows for the free flowing of ideas that can digress and move into past and future time without adhering to any particular form and code. The lack of set conventions is one of the conventions of the puppet world. Puppetry has been associated with oral language in primitive cultures. Aboriginal culture shows string figures which are used as adjuncts to songs that are passed down orally. Audience repetition of songs and parts of predictable stories are parts of oral culture often associated with use of puppet theater. Sometimes the puppets have no speech of their own but act in concert to a ritualistic presentation of a story in which the audience serves to vocalize the words.

Dr. Tova Ackerman works with simple and elaborate puppets in her Center for Puppetry at Brooklyn College.

Speech, then, is what separates this art from from others. Walter J. Ong (1982) speaks of the power of speech in his book *The Orality of Language*. "Speech is inseparable from our consciousness, and it has fascinated human beings and elicited serious reflection about itself from the very early stage of consciousness, long before writing came into existence. Proverbs from all over the world are rich with observations about this overwhelmingly human phenomenon of speech in its native oral form, about its powers, its beauties, its dangers (p. 9)"

Puppetry adds another dimension to speech. It gives the speaker a way to state a thought in a strong way before a word is uttered. It reaches into the psyche of the speaker to find the words that reflect the emotions and thoughts that are central to the speaker. It searches for the stance, the mood, the set to transmit feeling and receptivity to the anticipated listener. The power of the puppet is the power of a person to connect with others. It provides a way for connection that is direct because it travels indirectly, through the puppet, within the human understanding that is universal.

In *The Shoemaker and the Elves*, Lewis Hyde (1983) speaks of the shoemaker who finally succeeded in making his work live. He likens this to the artist who succeeds in making his work real by its reflection of his spirit. The "gift"—this creation of the artist—may be passed along to the audience who must enter a kind of state of "giftedness" in order to receive the creation of the artist. "Let us just say that the 'suspension of disbelief' by which we become receptive to a work of the imagination is in fact belief, a momentary faith by virtue of which the spirit of the artist's gift may enter and act upon our being" (p. 48). In the case of the puppet drama, the puppet—once having developed a life of its own—seeks to continue the relationship and turns it in directions that often have not been consciously intended by its creator.

In a discussion of the nature of metaphor, Ellen Winner (1982) refers to the use of the word "candle" by Macbeth upon hearing of the death of his wife. ("Out, out brief candle, life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more" Act 5, Scene 5.) Winner speaks of its metaphoric use to represent human life and goes on to discuss the fresh insights that metaphors offer the reader. We are invited to look and process information in a new way. In Winner's in-depth discussion of metaphoric language, she differentiates between "good" and "bad" metaphors. "Finally, good metaphors are more apt to be based on dynamic, changing properties of two elements, such as the way they move or the sound they make, rather than on fixed properties, such as their shape and color" (p. 54).

In Heidegger's sense of recollection as thinking which attempts to "approximate" the experience of Being at the beginning of history, we might say that the person, through the puppet, is going down into him/herself, into the "innermost" of individual depths of him/herself and bringing forth the potential to be

developed. The process of recollection is not dependent on the puppet, but the puppet is a way of crystallizing ideas and bringing a participation between a person's inner and outer self that is tuned in to a basic "primordial" understanding.

When we think of puppet drama in terms of metaphors, we go beyond movement, sound and/or shape. If Macbeth's "candle" is thought of as puppet drama, the problems facing the puppeteer would involve the whole concept of the image, the transient status, the fading of what once was vital. If the puppet looks like a candle, how does one evoke the image of Macbeth's wife. The technical problems to be explored might involve the projection image of the wife's face onto the flame of the candle. The question of transient status might be built into the movement of candle as it connects with the audience. The candle, as puppet extension, has a life of its own. It is a personality. It has to deal with the issues involved and to present itself as a statement, for that is in the nature of the visual quality of puppetry. The problems evoked by the media are part of its fascination. The audience must "see" into the character for the drama to be successful. This is true of all drama but the nature of the stated visual metaphor adds power to the portrayal of idea.

The basic dynamic is one in which the emotional response of the members of the audience is high, but it is also tinged with the awareness that they are responding to a bit of fabric or fluff. Before the audience response, there is a dialogue between puppeteer and puppet. This dialogue reflects many subtleties of thought that are stated in a simple outward shape with relatively stilted movement. This crystallization of thought and idea from simple to complex and back again refines the ideas being presented, and there is a point when audience and puppeteer connect that contains the moment of "poetic buffoonery" that Eric Bass speaks about. Issues of life and death, man's fleeting glimpses of his gods, loneliness and isolation and moments of ecstasy are analyzed, portrayed and commented on by pieces of fabric put together in all sorts of ways. The temptation to clown and to show both sides of an issue, to make fun of human frailties and to use a touch of the absurd, is overwhelming; it is part and parcel of the medium of puppetry.

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Drawing on Experience: The Article

Christine B. Root is a teaching fellow in ESL at Harvard University. She is the co-author with Karen Blanchard of Ready to Write *(Longman), with Tsukasa Matsui of* Campus Life, USA *(Kinseido), and with William Grohe of* Speaking Globally: English in an International Context, *forthcoming (Allyn and Bacon). She has written and presented many papers and workshops on ESL methodology.*

by Christine B. Root

While I was working on the plans for a creative writing course, friend and colleague John Dumicich suggested that I have students write from their own art work as one of the warm up activities. For years I had included "inkspot" art, an idea that I learned at a workshop with Tova Ackerman, wherein students each get a splash of ink and a straw with which to blow the ink around. Then, rather like the Rorschach Test, students must decide what they "see" and write a very simple accompanying poem (so-called "grammar poems" work very well: a four-line poem in which the first line consists of a noun describing what is "seen," the second line of two adjectives, the third line of three gerunds, and the fourth of a pithy statement about the item). I had also used Kendall Dudley's idea of crumpling, folding, tearing or otherwise mutilating a piece of notebook paper and using it as inspiration to write whatever comes to mind. I viewed this kind of para "art" work as playful and non-threatening. The idea of asking students to really draw something, be it representational or imaginary, seemed very intimidating to me.

I found the idea threatening largely because I cannot draw. At all. I do not perceive myself as capable of replicating what I see either with my eyes or in my mind, and I figured that any like-minded students would be completely turned off by such an assignment. John, however, based on the success that he had met with drawing/writing assignments, persisted and cajoled me into at least giving the idea a try as an addition to my repertoire of warm up activities for hooking students into their writing.

As per John's suggestion, I presented the drawing exercise as a natural extension of reading done in class and then used the drawing as the basis for a writing task. I was bowled over by the enthusiasm and interest that this activity engendered. Teruo Toko put it best when he wrote at the bottom of his paper, "It is very interesting to look into one's mind while listening to music and draw a picture. It digs out one's something from his mind." Not all students are great artists, but they all want to express themselves and are willing to try. This type of activity works perhaps because it appeals to both the bona fide artists in the class and to those who have something to say and are willing to try a new vehicle for figuring out how to say it; drawing is simply another and very powerful way of awakening and focusing students' creativity.

In fact, "research on the functions of the brain has shown that activities that involve the whole mind, that is both the right and left sides of the brain, make learning easier and more lasting. Activities that include the hand as well as the eye and that require the brain to create an image are psychologically more satisfying. Visual tasks permit students to express feelings and ideas that are perhaps too difficult or sensitive to express in words. They offer students a chance to communicate without words and use that result as a springboard to other modes of expression" (Mott, Handout, TESOL 1992). Visually-based tasks focus on the interconnections between images, no matter how primitive, and the tags we apply to those images. We benefit from visual, perceptual language as a parallel to the verbal and analytic thought processes (Edwards, 1986, p. xii).

In his essay, "New Words," George Orwell suggested that "each of us has an outer and an inner mental life: the former expressed in the ordinary language we use in everyday life, and the latter in another form of thought that rarely surfaces because ordinary words cannot express its complexity. Our goal is to dredge up that inner life of the mind by using an alternative, visual language to make inner thoughts more

NOTE: This is an expanded version of an article published in the MATSOL Newsletter (Massachusetts TESOL), Volume 19, Number 2, Winter, 1993. A discussion that is closely related to the following article is "Drawing on Experience: The Interview" with John Dumicich. It appears in this issue of the Journal.

visible" (Edwards, 1986, p. 66). "Symbolic language is intrinsically human and the making of art is also intrinsically human" (Edwards, 1986, p. 76). And "after drawing power from within, the human mind can then finish the work that imagination began" (Edwards, 1986, p. 228).

Inspired, I decided to learn to draw and found a course at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education entitled "Art for People Who Can't Draw a Straight Line." In the advertising blurb, Ellen Stutman describes her course as "an introductory approach to art as an expressive gesture. Emphasis will be on the creative act, rather than on technique and the finished product. The goal is to encourage students to develop and have confidence in their own creative ability." Although it uses a different medium for expression, this describes what John and I are trying to do in our writing classes.

At Ms. Stutman's first drawing class meeting, we were asked to think of someone or something that made us really angry. We were told to use only lines to express that anger. "Don't make a picture," she said, "just use your charcoal and sketch pad and whatever kinds and combinations of random marks you want." The results may not be everyone's idea of art, but I felt great when I left that class. I had vented my anger over an upheaval in my life, and I knew that I could go directly home, put pen to paper and, cathartically, let it rip. Unsuspectingly, Ellen had touched a nerve, and it was very easy for me to get to what Zen refers to as "wild mind, " where the magic of personal, expressive writing leads to self-expression as well as self-revelation. My simple, primitive line "drawing" opened the floodgates. In another lesson, we worked on the precise kinds of marks that are necesssary for "photographic" representation of an object, the parallel in writing being observing carefully, narrowing the subject, adding enriching details and building a picture in the reader's mind. In art, these different impressions are achieved through exerting varying amounts of pressure on the medium, using varying surface areas of the medium and using different colors. An artist is always working toward closer observation, more expert technical manipulation, clarity, and a properly narrowed focus so as to achieve a well-defined yet comprehensive and communicative final product. Stated somewhat differently, these are the very goals of writing. In writing, as in drawing, it is important to work on contour and gesture as expressive devices. It is important to concentrate and to focus and to layer so as to achieve texture; it is important to get away from the surface and the superficial so as to expand the work and make it richer.

To facilitate the transfer from drawing to writing, it is helpful to have students do a 10-minute "rapid-write" on the subject of the drawing as a warm up activity before they embark on a writing task. Peter Elbow has been credited with inventing rapid-writing (known also as "freewriting"), a technique used by many established writers for getting ideas down on paper as quickly as possible without censoring or editing. It is writing in streams of consciousness without worrying about mechanics and grammar. Its purpose is to let ideas flow so that there is substance to work with when it comes time to do the "real" writing. This has to be explained to students. Natalie Goldberg has written some excellent rules for rapid-writing that you might want to use to give your students as a guide (Goldberg, pp. 2-4):

1. Keep your hand moving. Once you start writing, don't stop for any reason. Just keep writing as the ideas pop into your mind. The purpose of this is to keep the editor and the creator from becoming mixed up. "If you keep your creator hand moving, the editor hand can't catch up with it and lock it."
2. Lose control. "Say what you want to say. Don't worry if it's correct, polite, appropriate. Just let it rip."
3. Be specific. "Not car, but cadillac. Not fruit, but apple. Not bird, but wren."
4. Don't think. Free your mind so it can wander. Go into wild mind.
5. Don't worry about punctuation, spelling, grammar.
6. You are free to write the worst junk in America.
7. Go for the jugular. "If something scary comes up, go for it. That's where the energy is."

In writing, it is important to find a vehicle for getting into the right brain so as to tone down the left brain and its overly zealous obsession with (premature) editing and correction. It is impossible to create

and edit at the same time, yet it is very difficult to disengage and get into the right brain where the creating takes place because the left brain is always trying to take over. Because the left brain rejects rapid-writing, it is very useful as a means of getting into into the right brain. It breaks the left brain's hold. It is not uncommon for students to lose all track of time, to feel "transported," or completely absorbed when they do a rapid-write as a result of having gone into the right brain and unleashed creative energy. Its purpose is to help students relax and create, to help them lose control and find "wild mind." They can edit later.

Listed below are steps that work well in prepapring students for drawing/writing activities:

1. Talk in general terms about the subject of the drawing, either as a class, in small groups or in pairs, working from prepared questions about the subject.
2. Give the students 20 minutes or more to draw an illustration. Background music adds immeasurably ("new age" music is especially good for this purpose).
3. Have students rapid-write for 10 minutes, based on the drawing. Again, "new age" music suitably creates the mood.
4. Have students mine the gems of their rapid-write, i.e. find the parts that they want to keep and develop for the final essay.
5. Revise, edit, polish and proofread for the final piece.

Some recommended drawing/writing exercises include:

1. Choose an emotion (anger works well!) and have students express that emotion using whatever random lines they want. You may prefer to have them draw a picture.
2. Ask each student to go back into his or her childhood and draw a childhood home. For many students, it becomes easier if you tell them to pretend they are five years old. They should do the exterior of the house and the landscaping.
3. Have students think of and illustrate a very happy memory from childhood. Students enjoy incorporating Carolyn Graham's "memory poem" ideas into this project (Graham, p. 25).
4. Have students think about where they will be in 10 years and draw the setting in which they envision themselves.
5. Use an article, poem or story (those of Hemingway, Grace Paley and Langston Hughes, among others, work very well) as the basis for an illustration.

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Using the Sunday Comics on Monday Morning

by JoAnn Hoppe

JoAnn Hoppe teaches ESL at Bronx Community College in New York City. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree and an ESL Teaching Certificate from the New School of Social Research in New York.

Comic strips from the Sunday newspaper can be used in a wide variety of ways to lighten ESL classes and provide an interesting change of pace. Recently, I used them as a source of dialogue and writing.

We started with a class discussion about sports—which ones are popular in the students' countries, which ones are dangerous, which ones are suitable for kids, etc. We got into the subject of baseball and shared experiences about the game. I had taped an article from the New York Times to the blackboard, and a number of students had looked at it before class.

The newspaper story, which was related to a comic strip I had clipped, commented that people love to catch foul balls at baseball games. I read a short section of the article that told how a father had caught a foul ball for his children. Several of the students told about how they had seen people catch foul balls and how exciting it was to see that happen.

THANKS FOR BRINGING ME TO THE BASEBALL GAME, MR. BUMSTEAD
MY PLEASURE, ELMO
I SURE HOPE I CATCH A FOUL BALL!
LET'S SEE, I WANT TWO DOGS ALEXANDER WANTS TWO AND ELMO WANTS ONE
HERE COMES A FOUL BALL!!
WHACK
HOT DOGS! HOT DOGS, OVER HERE!
HOW MANY?!
HERE IT COMES!
FIVE!
SMACK
BOO-HOO- I WANTED TO CATCH THE BALL!!
WHY DIDN'T YOU LET THE KID CATCH THE BALL?
STOP CRYING AND EAT YOUR HOT DOG

JoAnn Hoppe cut this comic strip into frames, whited out the dialogue, and had students supply words and a sequence of their own. (The strip is "Blondie" by Dean Young and Stan Drake, 1992, © King Features Syndicate, Inc.

The students were then divided into groups of four. Each group received a copy of the same comic strip "Blondie." It had been enlarged, cut into separate frames (pictures) and each dialogue had been whitened out. Students were asked to put the six pictures in order and then write a dialogue or story. It was emphasized that there was not a "correct" order: making an interesting conversation or story was the point. The students had a lot of fun with this lesson. Some wrote the dialogue directly on the whitened area, and others, who had more to say, used separate sheets of paper.

On completion, each group came to the front and read their dialogue. Actually, it became like a skit with each person playing a different role. It was fun to see the various ways one could arrange and interpret the cartoons. At the end, I passed out the original comic strip. A follow-up activity could be to compose the text—and even the drawings—for an original comic strip about a sport within their own country. Other variations include having students write the original dialogue as a story with reported speech, and having them describe what happens at some of the more popular sports events in their countries.

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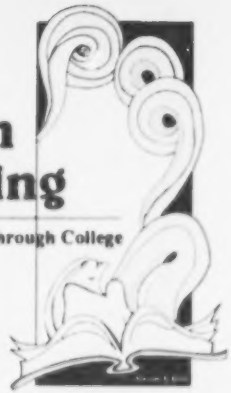

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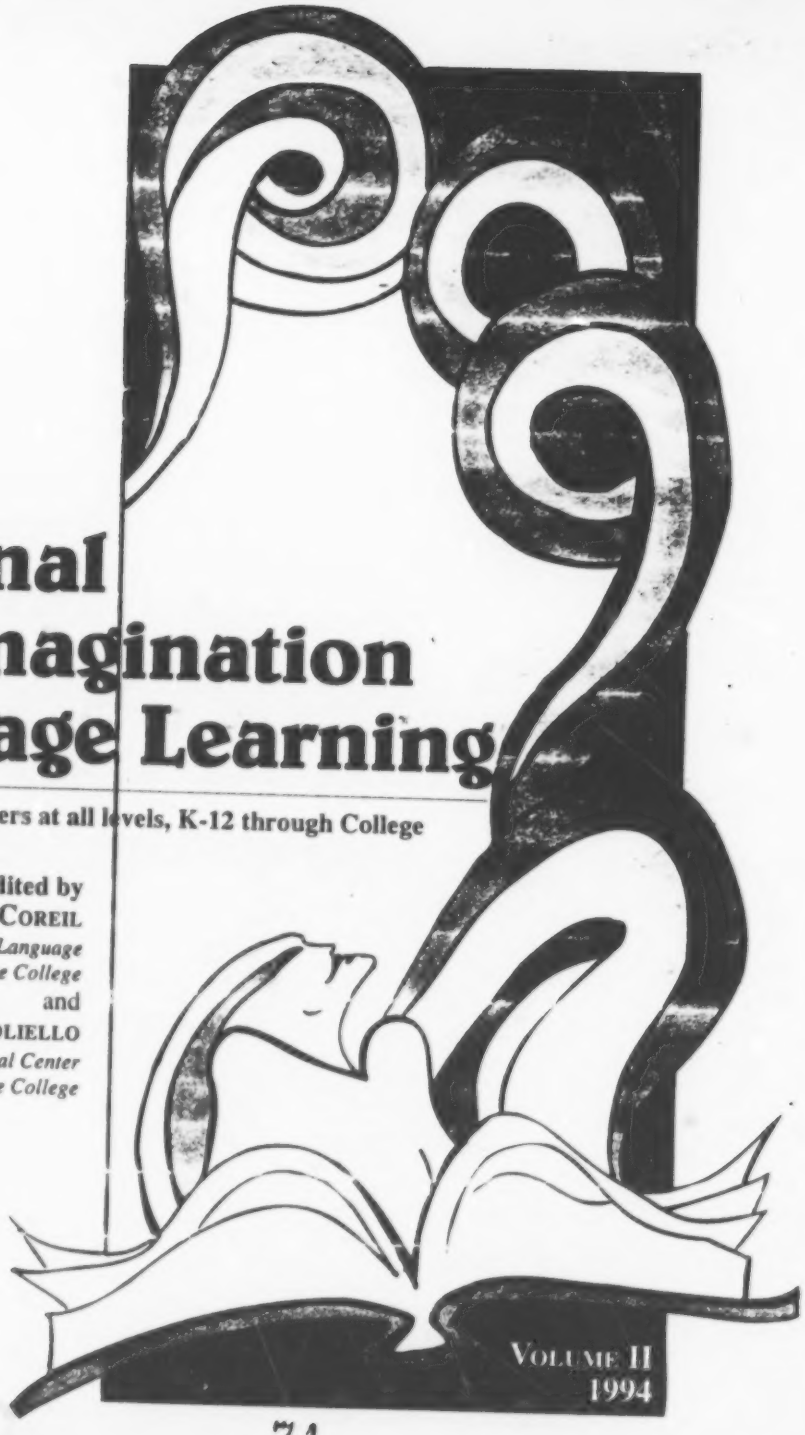

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Edited by
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Jersey City State College
and
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Multicultural Center
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The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning is published annually in conjunction with the annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning at Jersey City State College. Although the sessions at that Conference take up the same issues, the *Journal* selects and publishes articles independently of the Conference.

This publication is concerned with the following proposition: Attempts to acquire a language are significantly enhanced by the presence of an activated imagination. Both theoretical and practical articles or proposals for articles that are related to this broad area are welcome and should be addressed to either of the editors at *The Journal of the Imagination*, Hepburn Hall, Room 111, Jersey City State College, 2039 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey, USA 07305-1597.

The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning is published once a year and is sold at the rate of $5.00 per copy, which includes postage and handling expenses. Five thousand copies of the *Journal* are printed and distributed internationally to subscribers and to selected professionals and programs related to language training.

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Errata

At left is Dr. Loretta Frances Kasper, Assistant Professor of ESL at Kingsborough Community College, a part of the City University of New York, and author of *Using Songs to Introduce Poetry to ESL Students*.

Due to an unfortunate printer's error, the photograph which appears beside Dr. Kasper's article on page 92 is not of Dr. Kasper but rather of Ms. Judith Diamond, whose writing also appears in this issue. The Editors apologize for this error.

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Dear Colleague,

We are pleased to send you the first issue of our new *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*.

It is very important that we know of your reactions to this *Journal* as well as to the ideas that generated it—whether those reactions are positive, negative, or simply too faint to be discerned. Feel free to use the lines below for a very brief or a very lengthy evaluation or comment. If you prefer that your remarks not be considered for publication, please so indicate.

The second issue (1994) will explore the place of the arts and humanities in the language classroom. In the United States at least, it seems that that classic association has been eclipsed by models derived from the sciences. We enthusiastically welcome armchair comments on this subject, as well as carefully articulated reflections. You might well consider writing to us and proposing an article on this (or any other) topic. It's a good chance to be heard since some 5,000 copies of the *Journal* are printed and distributed annually in the USA and internationally.

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Of particular interest in the third issue (1995) will be creative writing and storytelling in the language classroom. Although the former might seem active and the latter, passive, that is certainly not the case. Both stir the imagination in different parts of a grand cycle. Articles exploring these and any other topics related to the imagination will be gratefully received and carefully read. Our somewhat flexible deadline is April 1, 1995. Persons interested in writing an article or conducting an interview, however, should contact us immediately by letter, telephone (201-200-3087) of FAX (201-200-3238, or 201-200-2072). It's a good chance to be heard since some 5,000 copies of the *Journal* are printed and distributed annually in the USA and internationally.

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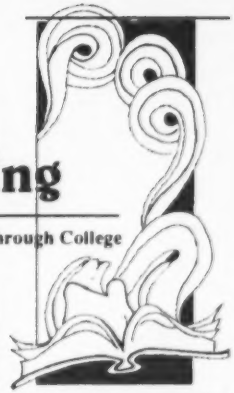

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The 1995 Journal will again list the names and addresses of persons who are interested in corresponding about the imagination in language learning. If you would like to have your name appear, please indicate the categories of interest below, and return this with your subscription form.

Please circle a maximum of 5 letters.

A — Kindergarten: Age 3-5 Years
B — Elementary: Age 6-12 Years
C — High School: Age 13-18 Years
D — Younger Adults: Age 19-40
E — Older Adults: Age 41 or older
F — Undergraduate College
G — Graduate School: TESL
H — Graduate School: Other
I — Vocational School
J — Private Language School
K — Intensive Language Program
L — Arts
M — Sciences
N — Military
O — Special Purposes
P — Survival Skills
Q — Mainstreaming
R — 2nd Language Acquisition
S — First Language Development
T — Writing
U — Language Testing
V — Materials Development
W — Linguistics
X — Social Issues
Y — Language Labs
Z — Bilingual Education

Comments on the First Issue

of The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning

"I ordered, I read, I reordered! What a perfect little collection—good size, excellent incorporation of art and photographs, and exciting ideas presented well. Good luck with this 'imaginative' endeavour."

NATALIE GAST
Customized Language Skills Training
Little Falls, New Jersey

"What a wealth of ideas and techniques!"

ADELE G. HANSEN
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

"There's a definite need for this journal in the field of Second Language Learning. I am also pleased the Journal of the Imagination was visually so beautiful and sparked my imagination! Thanks!"

DR. MARY ANN CHRISTISON
Snow College
Ephraim, Utah

"I have stolen five teaching excercises from this publication. What's not to like? Great idea. Keep going."

DR. DONNA FULKERSON
St. Francis College
Loretto, Pennsylvania

"My curiosity led me to read this *Journal* from cover to cover; seriously, when was the last time you did that with a professional journal? Be honest!"

Review in ELSIE SPEAKS
Language Center publication
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

"The colors, the paper, the art work are a joy to hold in hand and the content so relevant as I try to convey the aspects of language that seem to be most important."

LIZ BRUNKOW
Portland Community College
Portland, Oregon

"There are very good journals already in the field of applied linguistics, but yours gives a new look and compact content in an innovative presentation...As you point out, the imagination can help teachers and learners interact in spontaneous ways instead of always depending on written course materials. Thanks for sending me this publication. I shall send mine in exchange."

Ujjal Singh Bahri, Editor
Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics
New Delhi, India

"As a K-2 ESL teacher, I have found the lessons in which I use art, crafts and/or drama to be the most successful. The Journal fills a need for ideas in my classroom. I look forward to the 1994 issue."

PAT PARKER
Livingston Primary School
Livingston, Texas

"I am delighted to get the first issue of the *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*...These days, the more our lives are being mechanized by computers, word-processors and the like, the more we need truly human activities including imagination and creativity. Consequently, fostering humanity is an important component in language education. I expect very much from future issues of your review."

MARIKO HOLLAND
Nagoya Holy Spirit Junior College
Nagoya, Japan

"I teach foreign students who come to this country for intensive TOEFL preparation. They are usually quite well-prepared in their own countries in grammar, but lack communicative skills. The fact that they are highly goal-oriented, paying a high tuition, and used to a very teacher-centered classroom makes it difficult to get them to "lighten up" and allow their imaginations free reign. I was delighted to receive your new (and excellent) publication and look forward to future issues. I would welcome comments from anyone else facing the task of convincing college level students that they can both have fun and learn!"

LESLEY WOODWARD
Utica College of Syracuse University
Utica, New York

"A wonderful tool to lead teachers toward a true communicative approach. Thank you!"

MARJORIE FRIEDMAN
ESL Center, Eckerd College
St. Petersburg, Florida

"We need balance in the TESOL field. I am happy to witness the birth of this new journal."

DALE T. GRIFFEE
Seigakuin University
Saitama, Japan

"I really enjoyed reading the *Journal*...Most importantly though was that this issue helped me to explain to my students, their parents and other professionals about why using "creative" activities is important in the classroom. I'm looking forward to the next issue."

EDWARD M. LIDDLE, JR.
Osaka-fu
Japan

"I came across the first issue of your *Journal* at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Library in Toronto. Needless to say, I was excited...Keep up the excellent work!"

RAY E. BENNETT
Toronto
Canada

"...I strongly see a need for more frequent publications of your *Journal*, to not only inform educators about the role of the imagination in language acquisition, but also to legitimize its use and advocate for more support and funding for the arts in language programs."

RHONDA NAIDICH
New York, New York

"In Cambridge, one summer evening, Carolyn Grahm told me the 'Golden Balls' story. She said she sees life as being someplace where you go around throwing golden balls. She said that somehow all those golden balls come back to you. *JILL* is a golden ball...I thank you for allowing me to be a part of this."

JOHN DUMICICH
The American Language Institute
New York University

The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning

Dr. Clyde Coreil and Dr. Mihri Napoliello, Editors

Jersey City State College • Hepburn Hall, Room 111
2039 Kennedy Boulevard • Jersey City, New Jersey 07305-1597 USA

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to send you the second issue (1994) of our annual *Journal* and hope that you will find it as interesting to read as we found it to assemble. It is more expansive than the first—124 pages as compared to 71—and with 18 articles as compared to 12 in the 1993 volume. We feel that this is an ideal size and will attempt to maintain it.

We have been able to publish on pages 118 and 119, the names and addresses of persons who have indicated an eagerness to correspond with others working in similar areas. We encourage you to take the time to get in touch with them, to ask that your own name be included in the next issue, to let us know what you think of this feature, and to mention any others that might come to mind.

We are also quite interested in your reactions to the substance of the articles in this issue. Alternate points of view are what make the world go round. Your letters—be then long or short—will help us to justify maintaining the *Journal* at the current level of production. We consider ourselves very fortunate in being able to achieve a high quality of presentation in these two first issues. So let us hear from you.

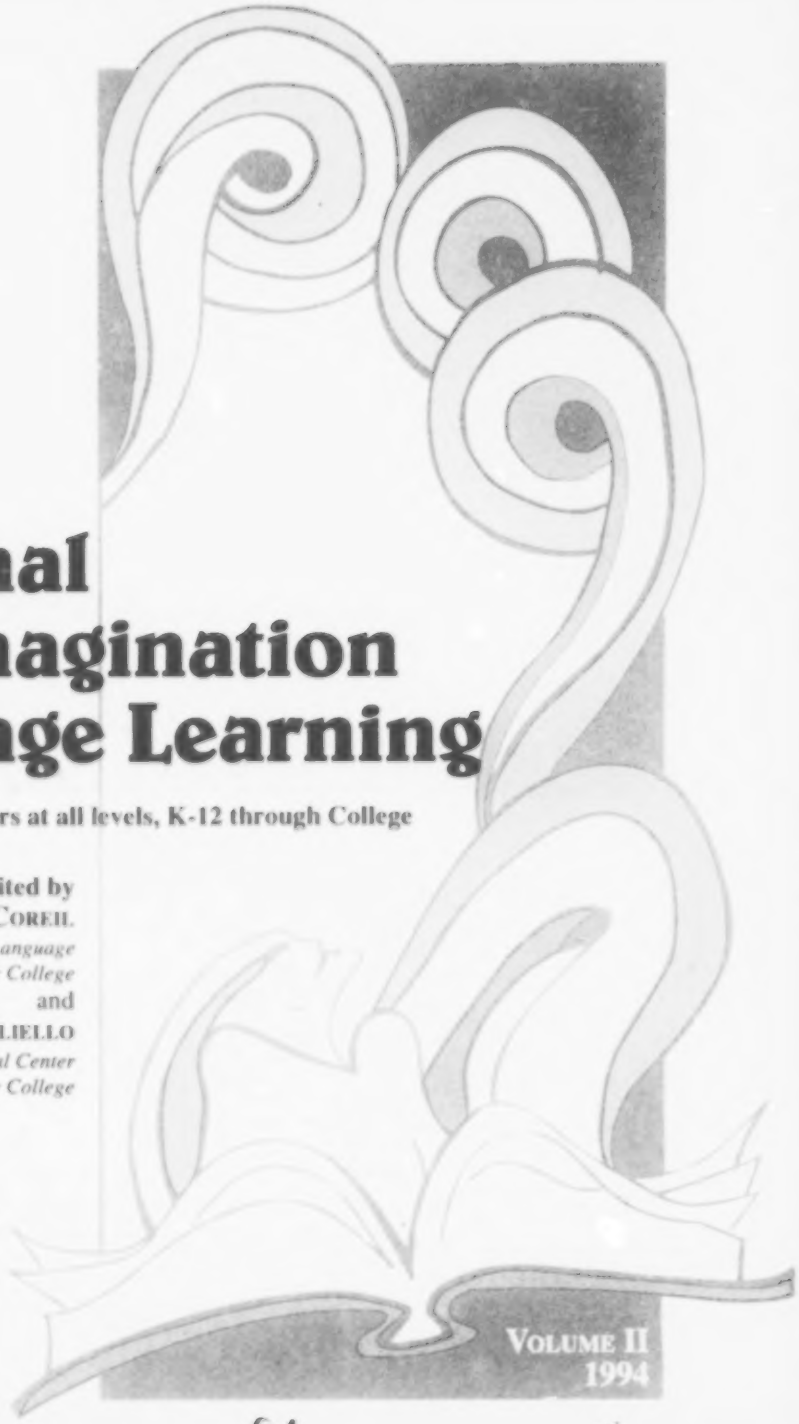
Another way to participate is by sharing the pedagogical technique or research project you have been working on. Although we have received some interesting submissions for the 1995 *Journal*, there is still space for your article if you act quickly. Our telephone numbers are 201-200-3087 or 201-200-3380; fax: 201-200-2072 or 201-200-3238.

Or, you are most welcome to simply reserve a copy of that issue. The price of subscriptions (one issue per year) is $5.00 within the USA or $8.00 from other countries, and includes mailing and handling. The illustrations alone are worth that. Consider having a copy sent to someone who values the imagination. That colleague you met at the conference last year would appreciate it.

If, on the other hand, you have difficulty in arranging payment because of problems in currency conversion or for any other reason, write to us. It will be our pleasure to make certain that you or your colleague receive the *Journal*.

On Friday, April 28, 1995, we will hold our annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning at Jersey City State College. This year's keynote speaker is Richard Lewis of New York City, whose career has been dedicated to children. He takes them seriously and listens to what they have to say. And what he says about what they say is indeed remarkable. There are also eighteen, 70-minute workshops in three time slots. Mark your calendar and join us. The fee is a modest $8. We hope to see you there.

The Editors



The Journal Of The Imagination In Language Learning

A publication for language teachers at all levels, K-12 through College

Edited by
CLYDE COREIL
Program in English as a Second Language
Jersey City State College
and
MIHRI NAPOLIELLO
Multicultural Center
Jersey City State College

VOLUME II
1994

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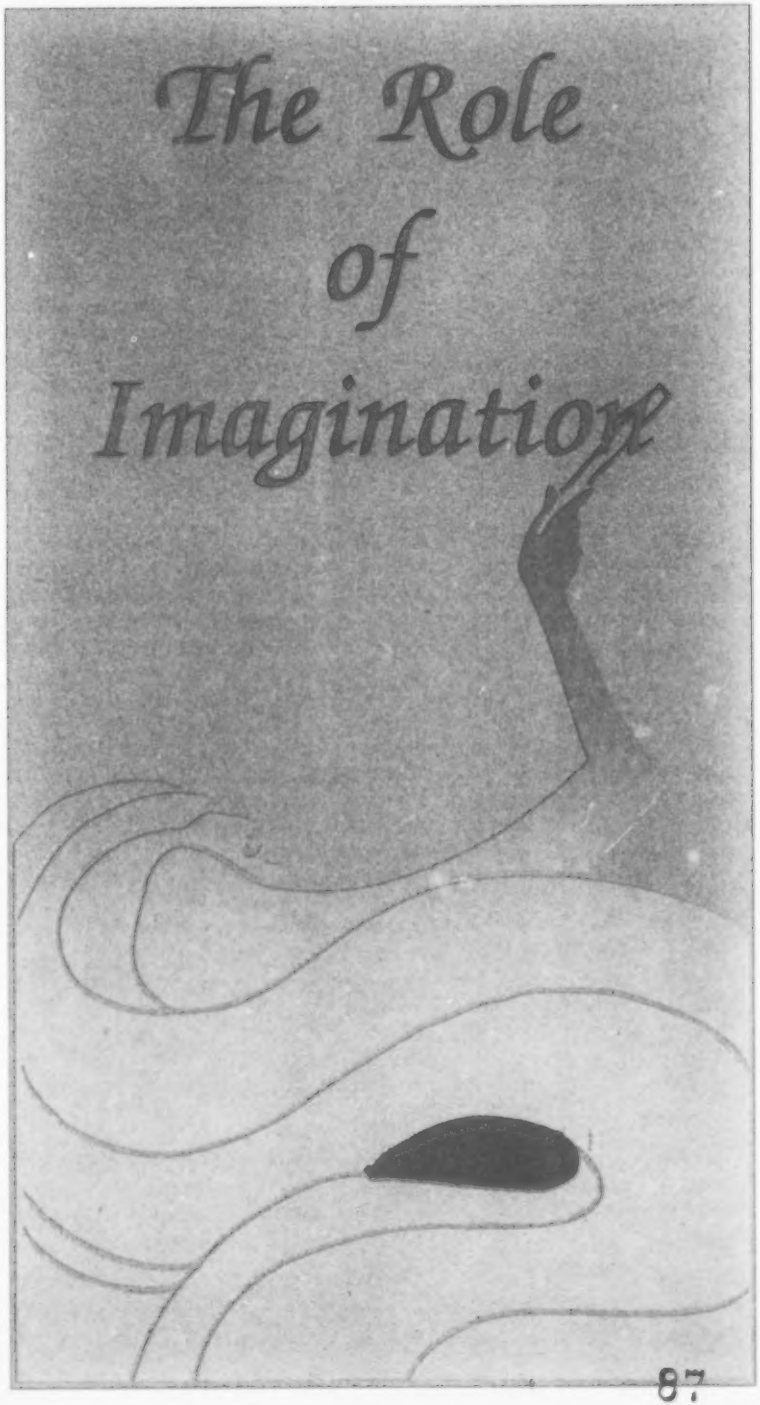
The Role of Imagination



Introduction

We deeply appreciate the many letters, notes and telephone calls we received, and the enthusiasm you have expressed regarding the articles and appearance of the first issue of this *Journal*. We cannot, however take credit for any aspect of design—kudos goes entirely to Mr. Ron Bogusz, now acting Director of the Office of Publications and Special Programs here at Jersey City State College. Working with motif drawings by Kalliroi Antoniou, an art major at the College, Ron created what we think is a new standard in the integration of ideas and visual elements in academic periodicals. We hope that his work—which continues in this second issue—resonates wherever journals are put together.

On page 120, you will find some of the comments made about the first issue. Although those responses were quite positive, there were several critical comments as well. For example, one reader, who asked not to be quoted, pointed out that there were too many interviews. We have corrected that, reducing the number from five to one, but not at all abandoning our position that talk can be quite as effective as formal writing in stirring the pot of ideas. The reader went on to add that he enjoyed seeing different points of view developed by different people from different backgrounds.

His point was well taken, and we do have more diversity in this issue. The authors are from Cuba, Argentina and Israel as well as Texas, Minnesota, Massachussetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.

Humanities and the Imagination

The articles we have assembled in this issue also represent a broad range of interests, ranging from rock music videos to novels to key-rings that turn into fish swimming deep in the sea. In addition to variety, we have attempted to focus somewhat on one important theme—the role of the humanities in the theory and practice of second language teaching. Although all of our articles touch on this topic, we point to those by Gertrude Moskowitz, Jean McConochie, Christine Meloni, Catriona Moore, Loretta Kasper, Thomas Garza, Claudia Moi, Judith Diamond and Elizabeth Minicz as especially relevant.

The term "humanities" is generally limited to language, literature and the arts, and tends to exclude other subjects, such as those that have been developed through the use of the scientific method and through concerns with the respect and understanding of different cultures. The imagination, on the other hand, seems part of all human activities. Indeed, a future issue of this *Journal* might well be devoted to the role of the imagination in emphasizing multiculturalism in language teaching. A consideration of the imagination in this context could conceivably be fresh and novel. These adjectives, however, would probably not be used to refer to the influence of science in language teaching. That role is not only very well established but, in many ways, dominates the ESL landscape.

Until this century, the humanities constituted the pedagogical focus of formal language study, and are still near the center of instruction in languages other than English—at least in the USA. As ESL came into its own, however, this emphasis was eclipsed by models derived from linguistics, sociology and the sciences in general. In fact, theoretical underpinnings are so much influenced by the demands of analysis and critical thinking, and so deficient in the synthesis of humanist reference that it would occur to relatively few professionals that any debate is warranted.

Looking more closely at this trend, we see that verifiable analysis of empirical data seems to be the primary modus operandi as well as the primary vehicle of prestige and recognition in the field. Accordingly, the ability to design, execute and interpret analytical measurements of carefully controlled data is

probably the most valued talent among researchers and teacher trainers. Such an approach is itself very productive, and in no way do we mean to imply otherwise. We also believe, however, that this emphasis on the techniques of narrow control is one of the main reasons why the broad implications of the imagination in language acquisition have been neglected, and why the humanities and arts have come to seem marginal if not largely irrelevant.

What we are advocating in this issue of the *Journal* is a reassessment of the role of humanist values in language instruction. One of our readers made a quite relevant point when he said that the first issue of this journal helped him "to explain to...students, their parents and other professionals why using 'creative' activities is important in the classroom." Of course, we found that remark to be in tune with our observation that the rich traditions of creativity in the humanities can provide a charged and meaningful way of exploring emotional responses to life. In so doing, the humanities not only give us a strong source of motivation and a multitude of fascinating things to talk about, they also provide us an opportunity to develop and expand ways of thinking and of expressing those thoughts. Creative activities push us hard to find and use creative language to articulate the ideas that rush through our minds. This yearning to express a freshly conceived thought or feeling is invaluable in the language classroom and might go a long way to insuring rapid and deep internalization of particular words and structures.

Affective Cognition

Most teachers would probably agree that methods involving creativity and the arts are well received in the classroom. We might step back and ask ourselves, "Why is this so? What is there in the makeup of the human psyche that responds to this kind of stimulus?" One obvious answer is that affect—which involves emotional interpretations and reactions—forms an integral part of cognition. And it is in the humanities that we find this part of the human mind most elaborated and developed. It is there that stories, myths, symbols and sounds every morning and every night renew their ability to reach the center of the human heart. But it would seem that any soap opera could do that. Not true. We demand far more in terms of rich, authentic, non-trivial context in which characters meet their doom or their majesty or their humble coffee cups, often in memorable resolutions. Very frequently, the phrases and sentences that a long-departed author used in reflecting on his/her comic or ironic or tragic fate have literally become part of our language. An enormous number of novels are fashioned from myths and legends whose abstract shape are now recurring structures in our minds.

Put in slightly different terms, literature, music and all of the other art forms represent access to a personal, emotive mode of thought and feeling that is essential to the development of a fundamental aspect of language. Specifically, that aspect involves the realizing and communicating of the affective responses that constitute so much of our lives. To study and participate in the humanities is to listen and articulate, to create and realize patterns of thought through the formation of abstract semantic configurations as well as of concrete language. To use the terminology of the computer, the humanities seem to contribute to the "formatting" of the program of linguistic expression, the potential for which each of us has inherited. In psycholinguistic terms, such experience in the humanities might contribute to the development of neural networks that facilitate lexical access and result in expression through language.

Without such formats, patterns or networks—call them what you will—the individual would certainly continue to live and use as many languages as he or she needs. However, the depth and range of conception and expressiveness in any of them might be hindered to a significant degree. In any case, what is involved is not a matter of simply translating concepts from a first language; it is a matter of forming them anew, of coming to think and respond in a second or third or fourth language. We feel that the humanities can contribute enormously to the process. To neglect this area of promise and potential is certainly possible. Whether it is a good and wise choice is another matter entirely.

Many of these ideas can be found in the articles that follow. We invite you to consider them carefully. We also ask that you drop the author and us a line—or a long letter. It would be a privilege to read and/or forward your written comments.

We would like to call attention to authors Thomas Garza, Stephen Sadow, Judith Koller, and Maria Kreie Arago, who are not primarily in ESL. Tom is in Slavic languages; Steve and Maria are in Spanish, and Judith is in French. Their work, however, is of clear and immediate interest to the ESL community, and we are proud to publish it. The burgeoning of English in the past few decades has possibly resulted in some degree of distancing between ESL and other second and foreign languages that are formally taught in schools. The shared interests of all language teachers, however, go far deeper than superficial differences in student population or academic department. We at the *Journal* are eager to make it clear that we hold this position and that we publish articles related to the imagination and the learning of a language—any language.

Earl Stevick (center) confers with Tova Ackerman of Brooklyn College and Clyde Coreil, co-editor, at the 1994 Conference on the Imagination.

Origins of the Journal

The *Journal* is a natural outgrowth of the Annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning, which we initiated at Jersey City State College five years ago. In April of this year, approximately 400 English language teachers from kindergarten through college attended the keynote address and 18 workshops, all of which dealt with either theoretical or practical aspects of the relation between the imagination and language training. The next Conference will be held on April 28, 1995: you are very welcome to join us.

A Special Note of Appreciation

We would like to express deep appreciation to Dr. Earl Stevick for presenting a workshop at the 1994 Conference on the Imagination. Throughout his career, Dr. Stevick has introduced innovative and challenging ideas that have enriched our language classrooms immeasurably. His work has brought him international recognition as the foremost pioneer in the exploration of the imagination in language learning. We thank you, Dr. Stevick, and we do indeed look forward to your future visits to our College.

Clyde Coreil
Mihri Napoliello

Humanistic Imagination:
Soul Food for the Language Class

Dr. Gertrude Moskowitz is professor and coordinator of Foreign Language Education at Temple University, where she has also served as coordinator of TESOL. She is noted for her publications emphasizing humanistic teaching. Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class *(Heinle & Heinle) and* The Foreign Language Teacher Interacts *(Amidon Publications). Her most recent interest is multicultural education. In addition to training teachers, Dr. Moskowitz has worked with medical students, nurses, counselors, therapists, and social workers. She has given presentations on a wide variety of programs throughout the United States and abroad.*

By Gertrude Moskowitz

> *Imagine, if you will, a petite fifth-grade girl with a gentle voice being asked to take the leading role of a powerful sultan in a spontaneous play for the entire school...*
>
> *And now, visualize, if you can, a group of Asian female students, quiet by nature, being asked in an American college class, to give an extemporaneous skit calling for action and excitement...*

How would these students do? How could teachers do this to students? What were they thinking of to cast these students in such roles? What purposes would such performances serve?

Well, I was that fifth-grade child who amazed myself at being able to display the temperament of the sultan in a loud, bombastic voice in front of several hundred students. You see, I had been chosen to be in a spontaneous drama club that year in school, which turned out to be an opportunity of a lifetime for me, for from this experience, I learned to feel comfortable being in front of audiences of all sizes.

As for the Asian students, they were in a methods class I taught recently on drama techniques in teaching second languages. And what a wonderful performance they gave! Yes, when we're given the chance to draw on imagination, we can stretch, grow, open up, and astonish ourselves. What happened in both of these situations is that the students were given opportunities to push past their traditional roles by tapping into their imaginations, and therefore could discover new possibilities and visions in the repertoire of themselves.

What I'd like to share with you in this "wonder full" *Journal of the Imagination* are my thoughts, feelings, and some memories related to imagination in general, its importance in teacher training, and its role in humanistic techniques of teaching second languages. Then, relating the latter with the theme of this issue, the Arts and Humanities, you'll find examples of some motivating humanistic activities which draw on different aspects of those fields.

Imaginings about Imagination

"Imagination" has always been a magical word to me. It's one of the things I've relished calling on throughout my life as a student, teacher, and instructor of methods courses. When imagination is unleashed, creativity is born; the two go hand-in-hand. If I were to generate a list of the basic essential needs in life, along with food, shelter, clothing, family, friends, being nurtured, accepted, and having a purpose in life, I'd *definitely* include exercising one's imagination, that is, tapping into one's creativity, as a *deep need* of all humans.

Human behavior specialist Denis Waitley in his research on what he calls the "ten best-kept secrets of total success" and "greatness," places "releasing your creative energy" second on his list (Waitley, 1989, p.50). He mentions that when, as a child, he asked his grandmother, whose wisdom he revered, what he could do "to plant great ideas" in himself so he'd "have a great life," her advice was to look at his IQ as his **Imagination** Quotient rather than his Intelligence Quotient (p.23). Sounds like grandma had great insights to share.

Yet, creativity goes unsatisfied in too many people, particularly after we leave the lower grades of school, and walls are no longer decorated and classrooms can be so colorless. Interestingly, in the classroom where I teach at the university, my students and I devised three bulletin boards which are decorated by the students in the classes. Humanistic posters in different languages and realia are also around the room. Since this is quite different from most university classrooms, I find that as students from other

classes pass by, a number peek in or come in and ask, "What goes on in here?" "What do you teach in here?" Their curiosity is aroused. On the first day of a course on diversity that I teach, some students think they're in the wrong class when they enter. So I ask, "What made you think that?" And they reply that it's so different they doubt that it's *their* class.

I've always looked up to and respected creativity in others and have found it so rewarding and exhilarating when expressing my own. Therefore, one of the highest compliments for me is being acknowledged for being creative. Let me share a recent incident that meant a lot to me. I had invited a very scholarly, articulate guest lecturer, whose mind is awesome, to a course I teach on Multicultural Relations. I introduced this noted genius to the class in a rather unique way. Unexpectedly, instead of beginning his presentation, my guest went to the blackboard and began to lecture on the techniques of *my introduction* of him, which he pointed out were exceptional and very educationally sound. He couldn't have flattered me more!

In discussing one of his three principles for managing imagination, Earl Stevick concurs with my guest, pointing out the importance of acknowledging expressions of imagination by giving "an appropriate social response" of appreciation (Stevick, 1993, p.18). Unfortunately, in second language learning, we tend to give recognition to the left brain more readily than to the right (Asher, 1993, pp.22-23).

I recall in my first year of teaching in a rural junior high school, in my sixth-grade English class, there was a 15-year-old boy who could neither read nor write. All he could manage was to painfully pencil out his name, which I still remember clearly, because he evoked such strong feelings of compassion in me. Let's call him Jack.

In this class I assigned a project which would consist of the students' papers bound together into a class notebook. Of course, Jack couldn't do the assignment, but I had observed from some doodling he did that he could draw. So I asked Jack to design the cover for the class project in keeping with the theme of the papers. The cover was *magnificent* and very colorful, better than I expected. It was something he was able to get recognition for from everyone in the class, and I capitalized on this opportunity to show him off. It seemed that no one had either noticed or at least taken advantage of the fact that though he seemed unable to read or write, he *was able* to do *other things* to express himself, and very beautifully at that, which enhanced his acceptability in my class. This "appropriate social response" to his imaginative efforts went a long way with Jack.

Overlooked: The Emotional Side of Learning

How we miss the boat when we don't recognize the potential of the imagination. And yet, too much of schooling does not, with rote learning, memorization, and traditional ways of learning and teaching ignoring the imagination, which is one reason such classes can be so dull—because they're UNimaginative.

I see this myself at the university level where classes can be very focused on one-way communication. And in second language classes of the past, certainly imagination was not adequately represented.

Along with the focus on the cognitive, or left brain, in teaching second languages, the role of feelings and emotions went unnoticed for quite some time. Yet how obvious it is that learning to understand and communicate by using a mysterious code with unintelligible sounds, certainly is conducive to frustration, anxiety, and fear. Before its time, I wrote an article entitled "The Fearsome Foreign Language Hour," which spelled out the many fears and their effects that are more prevalent in second language classes than in most other subject matter areas and how the teacher can deal with and alleviate them (Moskowitz, 1964). Although it is one of my favorite articles that I've written, I fear few people took "Fearsome" to heart.

Things Are Looking Up: Recognition of the Affective

Fortunately, the role of anxiety in second language learning has been recognized recently and is being addressed in the literature (Lucas, 1984; Horwitz and Young, 1991; Phillips, 1991). However, poor "Fearsome" has not made any bibliography on the subject, probably because it received so little attention then and would not appear in computer searches today.

With all that fear, all the more need there is in the second language class for calling on imaginative ways to teach, which again is a movement of recent vintage. Having an annual conference and a new journal in the field now devoted to emphasizing the importance of the imagination are contributions we can all salute. These are very exciting landmarks! Thank you, Clyde Coreil and Mihri Napoliello.

Certainly using imagination, the teacher's and the students', enhances memory and subsequently learning. As Stevick suggests, "our imagining equipment is intimately associated with our remembering equipment" (Stevick, p.18). I'm reminded of an introduction I gave in a class when I began a new concept in the course. I told a rather unusual story that one could visualize in which a key point was made. Long afterwards, when I've met former students from that class, invariably they've referred to that story which they still recall. So imagination can be a close cousin to retention.

When I first had the inspiration of what turned out to be the book *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class*, I had no idea whether those in the second language field would be interested in such a concept (Moskowitz, 1978). It seemed so "far out," a radical departure from what second language teachers did. Furthermore, I wasn't certain whether any publishers would be interested in the book because they would have to have imagination to understand its nature and its message. What followed was a series of pleasant surprises because the book was published and second language teachers from many diverse cultures had the imagination to see the value of personal growth in the foreign language class.

Imagination in Teacher Training

Teacher training courses provide a perfect place to promote creativity in teachers because we're influencing those who can affect many, many students by setting examples of creativity ourselves and demonstrating for *our* students to do so themselves with *their* students. Therefore, I've always felt that calling on the imagination in assignments given is a significant factor in teacher education classes. For example, I may ask students to create a character that they, as the teacher, will become with their students, and to surprise their students with this new being's presence in class. This is known as "teacher-in-role"; John Rassias is noted for doing this (Bacon, 1993). Before they get this assignment, however, I will have already carried this out with them myself. They, in turn, will demonstrate their new persona in our class and then in their own.

No matter what the age level of students, I believe we have to provide many opportunities to use the imagination. Specific ideas, suggestions, and concrete examples which can be seen then help trigger the imagination of students searching for a way to carry out a creative assignment. This may be even truer as learners mature in age. With young children, teachers may be more inclined to have them make up stories, poems, and draw, paint, or sketch, etc. Perhaps to avoid having students think we're treating them "like children," as they mature we may deal more with the cognitive and avoid calling on student imagination as much.

The assumption seems to be that older students no longer need that kind of stimuli to learn or to be interested. Not so. When I first pass out crayons, markers, and unlined paper in my college classes, I get quite an overt reaction, accompanied by joking and laughter. But after the initial shock wears off and they start expressing themselves in the designated activity, seriousness, interest, and pleasure replace the guffaws.

So, if you want students to create clever posters or a collage, show them some good examples. Once students complete the assignment, take slides or snapshots of their work and/or retain a few samples, if you can, to show future classes. Make video clips of action-oriented projects or activities, such as skits or a cultural affair, so that future classes will get a clearer idea of what you have in mind. Originality begets originality.

I find that when I give assignments calling for cooperation and imagination, some groups may be very morose, uninspired, frustrated, maybe even annoyed by the task until they hit on an idea. And then the juices start to flow and enthusiasm follows as triggering the imagination begins to energize as it satisfies.

And since imagination is not requested frequently enough, when assignments are given calling for imagination, students struggle asking, "What do you mean?" and "What so you want?" However, when

we free the need to create so it can be expressed and students get in touch with their imaginations, they are motivated, excited, and enthusiastic about whatever the lesson is that's being taught.

I do find that I have to give gentle pushes to turn on student creativity. Since many are unaccustomed to being asked to use their imaginations, this can be a struggle as they're not sure how to start. Master's degree students who elect to do a final project in lieu of a comprehensive exam go through the experience of "What should I do?" Some want me to tell them what to do. But once they examine some projects of their predecessors and we brainstorm a bit, and an idea comes to them, they put themselves wholeheartedly into the project from the sheer interest they find.

Recently, a master's degree candidate, who labels herself a confirmed procrastinator, had only one semester left in which she had to complete a master's project or her "habit" would cost her the degree. She got a late start by the time an imaginative idea of hers jelled, and I asked whether she could possibly finish on time the ambitious project she had planned. She became ecstatic about the project and assured me that despite her "addiction," she could and she would. And she did! And it was very impressive at that.

Imagination and the Humanistic Approach

And now, I'd like to turn to one of my favorite topics in teaching—humanistic techniques—which can be viewed through our additional framework and lens—for they are indeed imaginative. Without a doubt they are creative, they stimulate, and they motivate. In writing descriptions for programs I've given, I've often stated that humanistic activities are "novel," "unique," or "different." I do believe that part of their appeal is that they often call for imagination in students.

Yet it isn't till now when imagination is being given the full attention and credence it deserves, that I can fully see and acknowledge the added impact that it brings to the humanistic approach. So I welcome having my eyes opened even further to the significance of this marvel of the mind. Therefore, as I discuss them, please bear in mind that many humanistic activities personify imagination and call for it in students. Let me begin by sharing some general remarks about humanistic techniques in second language teaching.

So Different Yet Alike

Through the years I've trained diverse groups to use humanistic techniques in teaching second languages; in many the teachers were strangers, in some the initial morale of the faculty was low, in others the teachers were from various cultures. In addition, teachers from different countries have written to me after using humanistic exercises from *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class*. No matter how different the students or the cultures are, the stories that teachers tell me after using the techniques are very similar. Here are just a few:

> "In the two years they've had me as their teacher, I have never seen these students as excited or vocal in my class."
>
> "Their answers were so profound I had to keep reminding myself that these are only 12 and 13-year-old children."
>
> "The difference in the students is phenomenal. Motivation seemed impossible because they were labeled failures, but now there is a new atmosphere."
>
> "Even those with a limited command of English were eager to share."
>
> "Students volunteered who seldom raised a hand before. It was difficult to see that they all had a turn. That's a problem I love to have."

A great many success stories, intriguing to hear, seem to occur. But why? How can these activities bring about such good feelings across cultures? Why do they have such wide appeal? Here is what's involved.

Messages We Hear

Most of us achieve only a small portion of our potential. Why is this so? Some of it is due to mes-

sages we get in school, at home, and all over: "Keep your feelings to yourself," "Be quiet. You talk too much," "Not now," "Don't say that. People will think you're conceited," "You're wrong," "That's stupid!"

In other words, as we grow up, people in charge of us try to help us by telling us what to do and criticizing us when we don't please them. We also receive praise as well. For example: "Nice work," "Good job," "That's correct," "You look pretty today." However, most of us have probably heard far more criticism and been told what to do much more than we've been praised.

Students share mementos of their lives with classmates who admire and inquire about them. That's how "sharing leads to caring."

What happens then is we may not feel as good as we could about ourselves. And if we have a number of negative feelings about *ourselves*, we're likely to have a number of negative feelings about *others*. The two go hand-in-hand. This can then lead to feeling insecure and lonely, not being yourself, and not knowing yourself or others very well. Such conditions can cause negative thinking and low self-esteem.

Yet to feel good about ourselves, it's important to *know ourselves* as well as others. But if we're afraid to *be* ourselves, it's hard to get to *know* ourselves. The humanistic activities that I like help to combat this negativity. Let me tell you how.

How the Humanistic Helps

To put it very simply, the purpose of humanistic education is personal growth—becoming the best person we can be. Humanistic education recognizes two important aspects of people—the intellectual and the emotional. So the subject matter taught is combined with the feelings, experiences, and the lives of students. Therefore, humanistic activities deal with developing a more positive self-image, recognizing one's strengths, seeing the good in others, developing satisfying relationships, becoming aware of one's feelings and values, discovering oneself, and having a positive outlook on life. We can think of these as food for the soul, nourishing, replenishing, enhancing us at the deep inner levels of ourselves.

These purposes are certainly relevant to the classroom for the better students feel about themselves and others, the more likely they are to achieve. In other words, a poor self-image interferes with learning, while an enhanced self-concept can improve it.

Well-known therapist Carl Rogers revealed that the underlying theme of the problems his clients present is "Who am I, really?" and "How can I become myself?" (Rogers, 1956, p.196). So discovering what you are like and becoming that self are two *very motivating forces*. In fact, the most intriguing subject we can find out about and talk about is *ourselves*. And the way we get to know ourselves is *through others*. Therefore, communication that satisfies these needs comes from sharing ourselves and having others listen to us and accept us. What a perfect place it is, the second language class, to learn to communicate in such compelling ways!

Sharing Leads to Caring

What this means is that during humanistic activities, students talk about themselves and their lives. They share memories, experiences, feelings, wishes, values, fantasies, insights, and strengths, and they give and receive positive feedback. These themes help students to feel positive about themselves and others and to know one another less superficially. And when we let others get to know us and to see the kind of person we really are, they are more likely to care about us and themselves in return. People are more accepting of those they truly know than those who remain a mystery to them. That's why I say that "Sharing leads to caring."

We refer to this kind of communication as "self-disclosure," which means revealing to others things about us which are meaningful to us and which they would not otherwise know. This kind of interaction in relationships is much sounder, healthier, and more satisfying than one where people keep to themselves and reveal little to others. It is in the process of self-disclosure, or sharing oneself, that feelings of warmth and closeness develop as students get to know one another at a deeper, far more interesting level. *(Soul food at work.)* It is important to note that the teacher shares, too.

Noted therapist and teacher Sidney M. Jourard spent many years conducting research on the effects of self-disclosure because he believed it to be the most important thing in the world that can be studied (Jourard, 1971). In his book, *The Transparent Self*, Jourard says that the best way we get to know ourselves is through others and how they respond to us (Jourard, 1964). Therefore, it is important to be our true self to others so we can see the results of how others respond to how we actually are.

Since most of us have not had enough positive feedback or enough closeness with enough people, or as much attention as we needed when we wanted to share and be heard, classroom lessons become exciting for the students and the teacher when they help satisfy these universal needs. Now couple meeting these deep-felt human needs with the impact of expressing one's imagination and you have a potent package of appeal! So when these two areas, imagination and humanistic techniques, unite in classroom activities, let's call this marriage of the mind and soul *"humanistic imagination."*

Humanistic Techniques and the Arts

Now that I've discussed some thoughts and purposes of humanistic techniques in second language teaching and how imagination fits in the picture so well, I'd like to focus a bit on their use in the theme of this issue, the Arts and Humanities, because there is a beautiful blend between these areas as well. Humanistic activities call for expressing *yourself*, and the arts and humanities provide a variety of means for doing so. Activities can be done in which such things as music, dance, art of all kinds, sculpting, acting, composing (lyrics and other forms of writing), photography, film making, etc., are the nucleus for sharing about oneself imaginatively.

I've found that students are gifted in expressing themselves through such avenues and artistic renderings, which do not have to be beautiful, perfect, exacting products. Here creativity is really expressing yourself in a way that can be seen, observed, communicated, shown, displayed, read, shared, but in some way the sharing is of *oneself*, the power and beauty of who one is comes out. And *that* is rewarding to experience. How absorbing class time becomes when students are sharing their creations of the imagination, such as artwork, and the others can see, discuss, hypothesize or inquire about aspects of their classmates' lives. The artwork instills added reality to an activity and helps make students' lives come to life for others.

In my own university classes, I see visible differences in students when they show, share, or create from their imaginations. Joy is released. The product may be a sketch, a poem, a song, a mime, a skit, a collage, a story or an incident about themselves or from their imaginations, an individual or group project, a jazz chant, an activity, a game, a poster, a visual for teaching, a portrayal of a character, a cartoon, and on and on. Whatever it is that they are creating, it makes no difference; the satisfaction, the gratification, the creativity that results from working with one's imagination is both exhilarating and powerful.

It is inherently interesting not only for the creators to express their imaginative side and share it, but it is also highly fascinating to actually see beneath the surface of others. Students get to experience different aspects of classmates, and, in the process, enhance their own self-esteem and that of others.

In asking students to draw, dance, act, sculpt, mime, we're calling on the imagination of the person in the medium of choice and arousing the interest of others for that person through the activity. And the product doesn't have to be a masterpiece of art or acting or dancing or of a professional nature. In fact, the teacher who does a sketch to illustrate an event from his or her own life will arouse interest and will be seen as very humane for having drawn something on a par with an elementary school child's efforts.

A few weeks ago I ended a course by playing a tape recording of myself singing the lyrics I had composed to a song that I dedicated to the students. It contained a message and my feelings for them. Though my voice range couldn't hit those high notes, the room resounded with a thunder of appreciative applause afterwards, greater than I have received under other more traditional circumstances.

To illustrate how well humanistic activities, imagination, and the arts can mesh, I'd like to describe several activities which draw on different forms of the arts as a vehicle for student sharing. The following exercises make use of sculpting, art, music, dance and acting. A notation will be made as to how each activity draws on the imagination in carrying out the humanistic goals. The language used in these activities

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is created by the students, who are expressing what they want to say, meaning their imaginations are at work. So now let's see humanistic imagination at work.

Important Symbol*

A student proudly displays his signature in pipe cleaners with a symbol of his attitude towards life.

Obtain some pipe cleaners, preferably in assorted colors. Explain to the students that they're going to share something important that is going on in their lives right now. It may have something to do with a person, an object, an idea, or something they are doing or planning to do. Ask them to show the class what this important event is by making a symbol that represents it out of pipe cleaners. Give examples, such as "Suppose you bought a musical instrument that you are excited about and are learning how to play. Make something out of the pipe cleaners to show this to us, such as the instrument or a musical note. Or if you're going on a trip to a foreign country, you can make an airplane or a symbol that depicts this country."

Allow about 5-7 minutes to make the symbols. Playing soft music from a record or tape sets a pleasant mood for creating the symbols. Ask the students not to talk or discuss what they're making yet, as they'll do that later when they try to guess what the symbols mean for each person.

When the students are ready, either put them into groups of about five, or, if there is time, have everybody share with the entire class. Have them focus on one person at a time, trying to guess what the symbol is, what it means to the person, and why it's important right now. Having concrete symbols to try to figure out motivates students to want to guess what they mean and to hear about them.

Assessing and sharing an important value that is current in their lives is the humanistic focus. Creating the symbols and guessing the significance of their classmates' symbols evokes the imaginative focus.

Sculpture in Feelings*

Tell the students that there are many ways we can express ourselves and our feelings and that today they'll experience a very different way. Pass out a piece of clay or play dough to each student. Then ask the students to close their eyes and mold their clay into a round ball, continuing this as you read to them a list of words that represent feelings. Select some *positive* feelings and read the list slowly twice. Tell the students to choose one that appeals to them and let their hands create the shape that comes to them as they keep their eyes closed. Some examples of feelings might be: confident, free, daring, peaceful, optimistic, excited, loved, curious, joyful.

When the students have finished, they can go into groups to discuss their works of art or the whole class can do so together. This can be done by having students view the "exhibit," guess the feelings depicted, and state how they came to their conclusions. The sculptors then share the significance of their work. The discussion and unusual depiction of feelings is the humanistic focus. The pieces of sculpture, clearly from the imagination, can be very fascinating to see and tend to induce surprise in what one can create with the eyes closed.

Say It With Music*

The students form circles of 10-12 or more. Lively music is played with a contagious beat that most people will want to move to. The students are asked to move in their places in the circle to the rhythm. Then, one at a time, as they feel ready, they are to move into the center of the circle in their own rhythmic way, completing this statement: "My name is (first name) and I like to _____."

The focus student then acts out what he or she likes to do, such as swim, and rhythmically moves back into the circle while everyone else continues moving to the rhythm. As students state what they like to do, the others in the group call it out together, i.e., "She likes to swim," act it out, too, and then return

*NOTE: *The five activities described in this article appear in* Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class: A Sourcebook of Humanistic Techniques *by Gertrude Moskowitz. They are summarized here with the permission of Heinle & Heinle Publishers, Boston, MA.*

to moving to the beat. Humanistically, this energizing activity provides fun and good feelings as it loosens up inhibitions in students through movement, music, and mime. Imaginatively, students express themselves through the rhythm and the acting that they do.

Songs That Say a Lot*

Mention to the class that music can unfold fond memories in us. Ask students to think of several songs that bring back pleasant memories and then to think of what these songs mean to them. Then ask them to bring in a cassette tape or a record, if they have one, for any of these songs.

Find out whether one of your students plays an instrument, such as the guitar or piano. If not, see if someone you know does and can improvise. For those who do not have a record or a tape of one of their songs, have your musical person play a few bars of one of the songs on those students' lists. Tape record these in advance, unless the person can attend your class and play the songs while there.

In carrying out the activity, the students briefly share the special memory or feeling the melody reminds them of. A few bars of the song are played while everyone listens or sings and shares the pleasant memory of the person whose memorable music it is. As a follow-up to the activity, the students can write about the memories and associations of their songs. Recalling and sharing pleasant memories and feelings is the humanistic aspect; while selecting and reflecting on music with personal and positive associations is the imaginative part.

Branching Out*

Tell the students that there are many ways we can discover what we're like and one way is through our drawings. And you don't have to be an artist to find out about yourself this way. Ask the students to draw a tree. It can be any size, shape, and colors. It can look like an actual tree or one that doesn't exist. Allow only three or four minutes to draw the tree. Ask the students not to talk to anyone, but to focus on drawing a tree that pleases them. Play relaxing music in the background.

When the time is up, tell the students to study their trees and think about what positive qualities their trees have, such as "My tree is strong. My tree is graceful." Put the students into groups of five, telling them not to show their drawings yet. One at a time, the students hold up their trees and describe the strengths they see to the group. However, instead of saying "My tree is...," they should say, "I am...," such as "I am strong, I am graceful," etc., so through the trees, they are talking about *themselves*. Expect embarrassed laughter when you tell them this. When a person finishes talking about his/her strengths by means of the tree, the group members are to notice other strengths they see in the tree and share these by saying, "**You** are..."

When everyone is finished, the students select the three words they like best and print on their drawings "I am" plus the three adjectives. The students can then circulate to several new partners, holding their drawings in front of them so others see them. They speak to each partner, one at a time, reading aloud what is written on the person's drawing, but saying instead, "**You** are..." Then they add some strengths they see in each other's tree. No matter what the age of the students, the trees are always amazing to see.

Building self-esteem through such exchanges is the humanistic goal. In addition to the drawings, imagination is reflected in associating positive qualities between the trees and themselves and also their classmates.

Good Things Happen: Research Evidence

Now that you've come this far, you may ask, "Is there any concrete evidence of what happens when humanistic activities are used?" I wondered about this, too. So I carried out two studies to see what would happen. Let me share some evidence from this research that shows positive results can occur when personal growth activities are used (Moskowitz, 1981).

Very briefly, the studies were carried out in 22 language classes in grades 7-12. The classes included six different languages, spanning levels 1 through 4. There were 461 students in the studies. For two

months, along with their regular classwork, the teachers introduced some humanistic activities in just one of their classes, a class that could use a boost. Three questionnaires were filled out by the students before they experienced humanistic activities and again after working with them for two months.

I wasn't certain whether there would be any measurable differences in such a short amount of time. However, the results were very encouraging. They revealed that by interspersing humanistic activities into the regular curriculum, students improved in their attitudes toward learning the target language, their self-concepts, and their acceptance of members of their class. Interestingly, the studies took place in the middle of the school year so it was harder for changes to occur. The teachers said changes were easy to see since the activities were used in only one of their classes during the studies. This research supports the impressions teachers have of changes that occur in students when awareness activities are introduced in the language class.

Students hold up their drawings and describe the strengths of their trees, saying "I am..." instead of "My tree is..."

Further evidence of the positive results of these studies can be found in the logs the teachers kept related to their use of humanistic techniques. Here are a few sample statements:

"The humanistic activities have helped greatly in forming a strong group feeling in my classes."

"The pupils react well, feel comfortable, work better, and learn faster."

"The rapport I have with this group is entirely different from what I've had with my other classes."

"I have a new outlook on teaching. I had given up and had lost my enthusiasm. I thought I had tried everything, but this approach has made a real difference."

"I've become more accepting of the feelings and values of my students and also take into greater consideration what they think is important."

"I now have a better attitude towards teaching, a better understanding of a creative means of teaching, and a better self-image."

So teachers have been enthusiastic not only about the effects of such strategies on their students, but on themselves in their growth as a teacher and a more fulfilled human being.

And here are some reactions to experiencing humanistic techniques that were collected by their teachers from students in the studies:

"I feel more relaxed, more a part of the class, and more able to participate."

"In my eleven years of school, this is the first time I have looked forward to a class."

"This exercise was good because I talked to people I haven't spoken to the whole year."

"This class has meaning to it."

The results of these two studies suggest that there is value in second language teachers becoming aware of the potential of humanistic education and acquiring skill in integrating related techniques into their curriculum. *Pass the soul food, please.*

A Tribute to Lyricists

When I first sat down to write this article, inspiration came to me in the form of two lines from a popular song from the Big Band era—the title: *IMAGINATION*. Intrigued, I did some research to locate the words, only to discover something very fascinating to find. Would you believe that there are FOUR songs with the SAME EXACT TITLE, *Imagination*, dating back to 1890!

Imagine that! Song writers have been trying to get us to "tune in" to the power of imagination all these years! Just listen to their words of wonder about this "interesting subject... deserving of your attention." The lyrics encourage us to "try imagination, so to judge of its effect," to see what "this good gift can do," which "acts on almost everything and everybody too" (Gro, 1890).

We were advised that "Imagination is the force by which this world is run" (Mullen and Bryan,

1904), and then assured that "Our imaginations make this world divine." Moreover, "What a combination" it would be to "choose to use...your imagination and mine!" (Meyer and Caesar, 1928).

And when I finally located the lyrics of the song I was originally searching for, I found the main refrain to be:

IMAGINATION is funny,
It makes a cloudy day sunny,
It makes a bee think of honey,
Just as I think of you.

(Burke and Van Heusen, 1940)

And then it came to me. For the 1990's, why not compose still another song toasting imagination, this time for language teachers, where the chorus goes like this:

IMAGINATION is thrilling,
It makes my students more willing,
It makes language class more fulfilling,
Students gain, so do I!

(Dare I say "Moskowitz, 1994" ?)

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The Deep Water Had Deeper Fishes:
On Creating a Language of the Imagination with Children

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by Richard Lewis

How do we bring this invisible quality of thought called "imagination" to children? How do we make real the imagining process when that process is often seen as an impractical form of learning? How do we reach the "language of the imagination" when many children, even those who are not bilingual, have become unsure of their ability to use language of any kind as a medium for their own feelings and thoughts? What can we do to make the imagination a pivotal force in how children learn rather then a special kind of intelligence or talent deemed to be the property of only "gifted" children?

Let us look, for a moment, at the classroom where I am about to speak to some public school first graders on the Lower East-side of Manhattan about some creatures of the sea. I start, in front of the room, by rustling a few keys that I take from my pocket. I whisper to the children how—whenever I take my keys out and listen to the sounds they make in my hand—I am reminded of the sounds fish make as they travel in the darkness of their watery homes. I let my hand begin to move like a fish, wiggling and squirming this way and that—until I notice a few children in the back of the room completely absorbed in my every movement. I ask one of the children to come up and take my keys and swim down to the bottom of the ocean with me. Of course by this time the whole class wants to do just that; but before we get everyone involved, I give my attention to Maria, the child standing next to me. I give her the keys—and she wraps them up in her hand. I ask her:

"Would you mind if I took one fish from the keys and let that fish swim with me?"

"No" she replies, handing me one of the fish that she imagines in the set of keys she calmly holds.

"And would you mind if I give one of the fishes to your teacher?" who is standing nearby.

Maria obliges and gives her teacher a fist-full of newly created fish. Now there are three wholesome fish ready to plunge into the ocean. I ask Maria to lead us, step by step, down into the sea. She takes a deep breath (and we take a deep breath too) and gingerly we step into the wet and waiting sea.

Let me pause for a minute here because what I have just described is somehow at the basis of some of the questions I originally asked of us. We have assumed, as did the children in that first grade, that "to imagine" is not a difficult task because we started off playing. The keys I jangled in my hand—which I quickly made into fish and the sound of fish no less—were a quick invitation for the children to play with me. I relied on nothing more then each child's inherent ability for play.

The Language of Imagination

But their acceptance to play, to pay attention not so much to me but to what was in my hand, was their acknowledgement that to play was to invent. A simple household key is only a key until we let our imagination play upon it; and then, quite miraculously, it can become a fish, a dinosaur, a walking tree, an upside down rainfall, or anything at all. Once this play has begun, we have entered a language. A language as wide ranging as any spoken or written language—perhaps a language which can, if we perceive language as our ability to communicate through symbols, out-smart most of our conventional habits of communicating. For here is a language which can take any object, such as a set of keys, and transform it into a silent set of images we can step in and out of without anyone really noticing. It is a language enabling us to talk to ourselves, sometimes through words, sometimes through feeling, sometimes through precise imagery, and often through a marvelous blending of all these things. It is a language whose grammar is, by and large, determined by what we are playing with and how we play; a language which does not speak in ordinary ways, and is often understood only by those who are willing to listen and respond playfully.

The genius of this kind of language is that no one needs to teach it to children because it is a child's first language, inherited and made alive through the bones so to speak. Its first manifestation is the moment an infant picks up a ball, a stone, or a piece of paper and begins to play. It is the basic language through which children anywhere in the world begin to make contact with each other and the "things" of their world.

A child's initial schooling is really what he or she learns when this play-language becomes the tool with which to understand. By playing with my set of keys, I translate myself back to a language and a way of knowing that needs little or no introduction to children. It is their willingness to believe that such a language really does exist—and continues to be an important way of our communicating with each other—that ultimately makes a difference in how we proceed together.

In this particular first grade, there are a number of children whose first language is not English but who suddenly find an ease of expression and a fluency of thought when we continue to play with our fish at the bottom of the sea. When I ask the children to describe the fish they see in the ocean, there is no end to individual descriptions of long flat, round, silvery, sharp and heavy creatures lurking in each child's imaginary realm of the deep.

The children's enthusiasm to tell us everything they imagine is a good moment to ask them as a class to draw a picture of these swimming creatures. We give the children black construction paper and some crayons. What they portray in their pictures is not the idyllic waters of a calm ocean but an ocean that is a cross between a benevolent sea, and the confused and violent world that many of these children must come to terms with in their everyday lives. Some of the children volunteer the stories and poems within their pictures:

The guys were running after each other
This guy was fighting with this guy.
This is fish water.
A fish dies in there.
The guy was bleeding.
The snake went under the water and the other
snake caught him
The other snake jumped up because someone hit
him on the head.
-Robert

My fish slept—and he went far away to the deep water.
He went to the pawn shop downtown.
-Kristle

The shark fell in the water.
He tried to get the man and the man was moving.
The turtle is going to bite the shark.
And then the man is going to bite the turtle.
The shark said I'd like the turtle to eat him.
I'm dead 'cause you want to eat me up.
I love you.
I love myself.
-Molik

From their drawings on the black construction paper, we help the children make small cut-out puppets of some of the creatures in their pictures. With these puppets they act out stories, moving them silently through the air as if they, the children, had become the creatures themselves in the depths of unknown waters. Again the language of their play enables many of these children, who had been reluctant to do so before, to speak and interact with each other. The narratives they bring to their puppets are the inte-

rior worlds that many of these children inhabit but rarely have the opportunity of speaking about to anyone. When we ask the children to share with us what is happening behind the gestures and movements of their puppets, they gladly sit down with one of us and tell us their story:

The whale is blind.
The sun is too hot.
The kids are playing 'shark-attack.'
The boat is drowning.
-Michael

Dr. Lewis greets two of his protégés

The star is in the earth.
The air and the star mix up.
The fish jump into the ocean.
The sea horse swims in the ocean.
The man swims in the ocean.
The man saw the star fish.
-Theresa

Again let us ask ourselves about how it is possible to help children gain access to their imagination, particularly children who may have been hampered by expectations which assume that because they have not mastered the complexities of "correct" language construction, they lack imaginative capabilities. Certainly this is not the case with these first graders who, despite their so-called language deficiencies, find little difficulty in "playing," in "making believe," in "becoming" something other than themselves in order to speak "imaginatively." Their imaginative language is vibrant with a knowledge that sometimes contradicts the idea that children who have had little "real-life" experience, such as actually going to the ocean, could not possibly "imagine" anything about the ocean. Yet, time and time again, this assumption is proven wrong when they show themselves to be perfectly capable of reaching understandings that lie beyond merely factual information. The first graders we mentioned earlier are a good example of this.

Imaginative Understanding

It is my contention that this "imaginative understanding" is a deeply felt experience and intuition which operates below and around our everyday levels of speech and verbal articulation. It is an understanding, as we said of the language of play, which is within the very fibres of our genetic makeup. It is part of a language which tries, at every turn of our lives, to make sense of who and what we are; a bridge which connects unknowns with knowns, fragments of thoughts with patterns of thought, questions with answers, feelings with actualities. Without this language we would be unable to be aware, to be awake to our own desire to speak, to even formulate the concept of symbols which make up the words of our daily speech.

If the unlocking of this language of the imagination with a group of children can happen so quickly and simply by the rustling of my keys and my accompanying disclosure that some fish are swimming inside the darkness of the sea, then, it seems to me, we might have a clue as to how to use this kind of language with children differently than we have in the past. Perhaps we need, in much of our teaching, to begin with a language of imaginative thought as the basis of how we teach and how children can learn. Perhaps we ought to first bring children into the metaphors of their own playfulness and, once they are securely inside this playfulness, allow them to learn from the inside out. (If I am a fish in the sea, what would the water around me feel like, what are the sounds that waves make, what are the colors of the passing daylight?) The questions we ask of ourselves and of children are always different when we play. And the answers to these questions are often, because of the nature of play, that much more personal. If more personal, then language, as a means of our explaining ourselves, has the possibility of being less mechanistic and distancing, and closer to being honest and genuine.

Jessica, one of the children in that first grade, became so much a part of her own playfulness that she could hardly contain her enthusiasm when I let the fish from my key chain escape into the room each week. Her confidence grew as she entered the language of her imagining and realized how we, her teachers and fellow players, welcomed her thoughts as she drew or wrote about the world within her. One day she asked me to sit with her so that I could take down a story she had become, a language she had retained and believed in because it was her own. As if reading a book she had memorized, she turned each page of her thoughts with the anticipation of one who savored what came next and knew, instinctively, how important it was for both of us to be there, listening:

A mermaid who turned into a woman
when she came out of the water.
And then the deep water
had deeper fishes.
And then the princess star fish came.
And then the water came over her.
And then the water turned
into a star fish crown.
And then I came out of the water and lay down
next to a big giant tree.
And then the black water came over me when
I was laying down over the big giant tree.
And then the big beautiful rainbow came.
And then I went in the big beautiful rainbow
and I saw a beautiful world.

Telling Tales in School:
Using Myths in the ESL Classroom

Dr. Jean McConochie, professor of English and director of ESL courses at Pace University, New York, is a past president of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL). This paper incorporates suggestions from participants at TESOL's 28th Annual Convention, Baltimore, 1994, as well as invaluable contributions from David R. Werner, a long-distance colleague.

by Jean McConochie

In college and university ESL programs, many of our students are young or middle-aged adults who grew up in China or Russia or Haiti but will spend the rest of their lives in an English-speaking country. These students often feel stranded, for their previous life experience—and the ways it has shaped their being—may seem to have no application or value. In this situation, myths can form a bridge to help students recognize the commonalties of human experience and existence that they thought had been lost in the mad rush of airports and the disorientation of temporary housing. This paper notes reasons for the power of myths, presents a series of interrelated myths, focusing on the Odyssey (which is itself an adaptation of many myths to fit a single hero), and suggests ways to use myths in a college ESL classroom.

An Experience of Commonality

Myths provide an experience of commonality because they are a people's earliest imaginative expression of deep emotions. The terror of death, for example, is soothed in many cultures by myths that promise a return from the dead. Among the best known is the Greek myth of Demeter, the goddess of the earth, who became distraught when her lovely daughter Persephone, was kidnapped by Hades, Lord of the Underworld, to be his bride. In her sorrow over her daughter's symbolic death, Demeter vowed that the earth would rest infertile until her daughter returned. Finally a compromise was reached. Now Persephone is released from the Underworld for eight months of each year, bringing spring with her, for on her return, Demeter joyfully allows the rebirth of the earth.

This shorthand way of talking about common human experience accounts for the frequent use of mythological references in both literature and popular culture. In Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the hero, Jack Worthing, refers to his future mother-in-law, Lady Bracknell, as a Gorgon—the mythical woman whose look turned her beholders to stone. Though he doesn't "really know what a Gorgon is like," Jack is "quite sure that Lady Bracknell is one." And he concludes, "In any case, she is a monster, without being a myth, which is rather unfair."

While today's college students generally don't recognize the mythological allusion without explanation, once it is explained they understand it immediately. That is, myths are important for our students not as artifacts of cultural literacy but because their treatment of universal themes provides a common frame of reference within the diversity of our classrooms, where the only obvious universal may be the need to learn English. This potential has been illustrated almost weekly in the adventures of the crew of the Starship Enterprise, whose mission is "to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before." While English is the convenient lingua franca of these deep space adventures, in one episode Captain Picard finds himself marooned on a barren planet with a hostile being of another race with whom he cannot find a common language. The two have nearly killed each other before Picard realizes that the basis of the other's language is metaphor, that the entire language is grounded in figures of speech. The captain then makes his breakthrough by telling a story from the Sumerian-Babylonian myth of Gilgamesh, a hero similar in many ways to the Greek Odysseus.

That is, through mythology, we can explore other cultures and, like the crew of the Enterprise, discover elements that are common to all peoples, for myths touch what is primeval in all peoples. Moreover, myths affirm universal discoveries of what it means to be human.

The Quest

Discovery is, in fact, the basis of a mythological form familiar to all cultures—the quest story. In a

quest, a hero (typically, the protagonist is male, while females serve as guides or facilitators) is called to face many trials while searching for an object or experience that will allow him to return his own community on a higher level or plane. Myths in general, and quest stories in particular, touch on basic elements of human relationships: loyalty and betrayal, with the corollary that human mistrust or curiosity often bring trouble; bravery and cowardice, with the corollary that cleverness can often overcome superior physical strength; and love and hate, with the corollary that transformations, human and otherwise, may come about when least expected, often because of love. We can invite our students to sample all of these ideas by joining one of the great heroes of myth, Odysseus, as he journeys home from the Trojan War. And as we do so, we may take sidelong glances at myths from other sources.

Loyalty and Betrayal

Loyalty and betrayal, key elements in any life, are part of the root cause of the Trojan War, as the story is told by Homer in the Iliad. The war was fought over Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world. Before deciding among Helen's many suitors, her father had made all of them pledge to support whichever of the suitors became her husband. Her father then gave her in marriage to Menelaus, the King of Sparta. Not long after, Paris, a young prince of the nearby kingdom of Troy, came to visit. Betraying the trust and hospitality of Menelaus, Paris seduced Helen and took her back with him to Troy. This social and marital betrayal set off a ten-year war between the greatest heroes of Greece and Troy.

Among those fighting on the Greek side in the Trojan War was Odysseus, King of Ithaca, who sailed for Troy, leaving behind his wife, Penelope, and their infant son, Telemachus. Penelope is a prototypical example of loyalty, for she remained true to her husband for the ten years of the war and then, even when he did not return, for yet another ten years. However, since Penelope was an attractive and wealthy woman, as the years passed there were many suitors for her hand. The suitors installed themselves in the palace of Odysseus, demanding more and more insistently that she choose among them. Finally, Penelope announced that she would make a choice when she had completed her filial duty of weaving a shroud for her husband's aged father. Every day the suitors saw Penelope weaving at her loom. Every night, however, she surreptitiously unraveled the work. When a disloyal housemaid betrayed the secret, the suitors became more importunate. What was the resolution? For the moment, it is enough to say that the loyalty of two elderly servants played a crucial role.

Myths of Betrayal

What other myths provide examples of betrayal? For betrayal within a family, there is the Biblical story of Joseph, whose jealous brothers stole his coat of many colors (his "amazing Technicolor dreamcoat" in Andrew Lloyd Weber's phrase) and sold him into slavery. Betrayal between close friends is exemplified by the Sioux legend of Black Crow, who betrayed his lifelong friend Brave Eagle when they both fell in love with the same woman. Contemporary parallels are easily found in the day's news—betrayal of country in the current Aldrich Ames spy story—as well as our own and our students' lives.

Illustrating another aspect of betrayal, several elements of the Odyssey illustrate harm resulting from mistrust and harmful curiosity. At the conclusion of the Trojan War, when Odysseus and his men set sail for home, they visited the kingdom of Aeolus, a mortal who had been given custody of all of the winds. As they were leaving, Aeolus made Odysseus a present of a leather sack, in which all of the storm winds were confined, together with many other gifts of food and wine and clothing. Odysseus divided the gifts fairly among his men, at the same time cautioning them that the sack must on no account be opened. But when their homeland was nearly in sight and Odysseus out of earshot, his brother-in-law said to the men, "Look at that sack. Why is Odysseus guarding it so closely? Surely it is filled with gold that he plans to keep for himself. But haven't we shared the dangers equally? Don't we deserve an equal share of all the rewards?" With that, they opened the sack, releasing winds that quickly blew them off course.

You will recognize the similarity to that story to the story of Pandora's box, and students may well be able to provide other versions from other cultures. Both the historical record and contemporary life pro-

vide ample evidence of betrayal either for the sake of greed, as in the case of the sailors, or out of curiosity, as in Pandora's case.

Since myths are transmitted through the oral tradition, the stories inevitably change with each telling, reflecting the characteristics of both teller and audience. For example, you have surely heard these stories of Odysseus told in other ways, and they will change slightly as you—or your students—retell them. After class discussion of loyalty and betrayal stories, students might be invited to exercise their imaginations by working in groups to create their own versions of the Aeolus episode, for example adapting it for a young audience, or setting it to another time or place, as the writers of Star Trek do (not only with myths) or directors frequently do with the plays of Shakespeare.

Bravery and Cowardice

Just as loyalty and betrayal are contrasting qualities, so are bravery and cowardice. As we have said, during a quest, the hero repeatedly finds his bravery tested. (In modern quest stories, of course, it may be the heroine; Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* is a prime example.) During the Trojan War, Odysseus's heroism was repeatedly tested in battle; on his ten-year voyage home, it was tested by perils not only by human but also super-human.

Among the latter were literal man-eaters including the Cyclopes, Polyphemus. When Odysseus and his men came upon Polyphemus's cave on the island of these one-eyed giants, they hoped to be received as honored guests. But instead Polyphemus ate two of them for supper and another for breakfast. Then he drove his sheep out to pasture, blocking the cave's entrance with a giant boulder. The men were in despair, but Odysseus, exemplifying the power of cleverness when physical strength won't suffice, found a shaft of wood, sharpened one end, and hid it near the fire. When the Cyclopes returned and questioned Odysseus about his origins, our hero spun a long tale and announced that his name was "No Man." Polyphemus ate two more of the men, promising "No Man" that he could look forward to being eaten last. When the giant fell asleep, the men heated the end of the shaft to a glowing red, then plunged it into the single eye of the sleeping giant. Polyphemus roared with pain, and when his brothers called from outside the cave to ask what was wrong, he cried out "No Man is killing me."

"If no one's there, then he's just having a bad dream," the brothers said to each other, and they went back to bed. Preparing for the certainty that the blind Polyphemus would search every animal leaving the cave in the morning, the wily Odysseus hit on the idea of binding the sheep together in threes, with one man clinging to the belly of each middle sheep, and himself burrowing deep within the wool of the single remaining sheep. The plan worked and they made their escape.

As they rowed away from the island, however, Odysseus could not resist taunting Polyphemus by calling out his true name, reminding us of the very human need to let someone know when we have successfully tricked them. (You may remember a similar scene in *The Sting*.) As a result, Polyphemus prayed to his father, Poseidon, the god of the sea, to destroy his enemy Odysseus. Thus Odysseus and his men became involved in a sort of tug-of-war between the gods, with Poseidon vowing that they would never see their homeland again and Athena, the goddess of wisdom, who loved Odysseus for his cleverness, intervening on his behalf.

Tricksters in Your Class?

His cleverness places Odysseus firmly in the tradition of the trickster. In West African mythology, this role is played by Ananse the Spider. In American folklore, the trickster is Brer Rabbit. In Native American legends, as transposed to modern times by Louise Erdrich in *Love Medicine* and other books, the trickster is personified by Gerry Nanapush, who even breaks out of the maximum security prison in Joliet, Illinois. Discussing this character trait again provides an opportunity for students to contribute stories, of either fictional tricksters or real ones. With luck, you might even find that someone in your class takes pride in playing such a role.

Returning to the perils of the *Odyssey*, among the figurative man-eaters whom the mariners encoun-

ter are the Sirens, sea goddesses whose seductive voices lure sailors to their death on the rocks. Odysseus shows both bravery and cleverness in devising a way to sail past the Sirens. Telling his men of the danger posed by the Sirens, Odysseus ordered the men to stop their ears with wax, then tie him tightly to the mast of the ship; if he signaled them to release him, they were to redouble the ropes. This time the sailors did as they were told, and Odysseus became the first—and last—man to hear the Sirens' song and live. And what was their lure? As with the temptation of Eve in the Judeo-Christian story of the Garden of Eden and the temptation of Faust in German legend, the sirens' song was an offer of infinite wisdom. (Faust, as you remember, was also seduced by the Devil's offer to produce Helen of Troy.)

Probably the greatest test of Odysseus's bravery came when he visited Hades, the kingdom of the dead ruled over by "the dread Persephone," as she was known there. (Here we have the figurative death and rebirth of the hero, common in quest stories.) Odysseus had been sent to Hades to find out from the spirit of Tiresias—the same blind prophet who appears in legend of Oedipus—what he must do to reach home. After questioning Tiresias, Odysseus also spoke with his mother, who had died of grief over his long absence, and with comrades killed in the Trojan War. But he left before talking with all whom he wanted to see, fearing that Persephone might decide to send out the Gorgon, whose glance would, of course, have turned him to stone.

In all of these encounters, Odysseus's men exemplified the cowardice that most of us would feel in the face of grave danger, wringing their hands and gnashing their teeth, and exclaiming, "We're all gonna die!" In *The Wizard of Oz*, the Cowardly Lion serves as our stand-in for these fears, while Dorothy—who, like Odysseus, wants more than anything to return home—exemplifies bravery.

Yet another test, and another betrayal, came when Odysseus's ship had once again almost reached Ithaca. As they approached the island of the sun god, Apollo, Odysseus reminded his men of Tiresias's warning—that harming any of the Sun God's animals would prove fatal to them. (The warning and reminder provide easily recognizable examples of dramatic foreshadowing.) In light of that danger, Odysseus urged his men to keep on course for Ithaca. But again his brother-in-law took the opposite side and led the men in insisting on a rest. Soon after they landed, however, the winds died and the mariners found themselves trapped on the island. After a few weeks, their supplies ran low and the men grew hungry. Although Odysseus repeatedly warned his men not to harm any of the Sun God's sheep or cattle, one day when he went off alone to pray for guidance, the men, inevitably, seized the opportunity to slaughter and roast one of Apollo's beautiful curly-horned rams. The god was furious, and though he finally allowed Odysseus and his men to leave the island, on the final lap of the voyage all but Odysseus were washed overboard and drowned. That punishment exemplifies the effects of hatred, which, as many myths show us, drives both gods and humans to acts of violence.

Encounters with Love

As for love, in the course of Odysseus's wanderings, he was tempted by love in encounters with three women. The first was the literally captivating nymph Calypso, who offered him immortality if only he would stay with her. Immortality was also offered by the beautiful witch Circe. She normally turned every man who approached her home into a beast, but Circe was herself transformed by her love for Odysseus, the first man able to resist her charm. The third woman was the teenage princess Nausicaä, who hoped that Odysseus would become her husband. All three, in other words, offered to "transform" him in either physical or civil state, as a gift of love. But Odysseus resisted all three, finally convincing each to show her love by releasing him to pursue his goal of returning to his homeland and his wife Penelope.

When Odysseus finally reached home, the goddess Athena—who had helped him throughout the voyage and who provides an example of admiring, rather than sexual love—gave him the appearance of an old beggar, another transformation. Thus disguised, Odysseus made his way to the palace. There Penelope graciously received him with the honor due any guest, no matter how humble, while the suitors confirmed their lack of worthiness by mocking him. Odysseus's opportunity to express his hatred for the

suitors came when Penelope, prompted by Athena, announced that she would at last choose a new husband. Her choice, she said, would be the man who could most easily string the bow left by her late husband and then shoot an arrow through twelve rings. While the suitors tried, their own weapons were unobtrusively removed by Odysseus's son, to whom the returned king had revealed his secret, and the doors to the hall were quietly locked from the outside by a loyal servant, whom Odysseus had also taken into his confidence. When all of the suitors had tried and failed, the women left the hall and the remaining door was quietly barred. Then the disguised Odysseus, to the mocking laughter of the suitors, insisted on his turn with the bow. He strung it, shot an arrow through the twelve rings, and proceeded, with the help of his son, to slaughter the greedy suitors.

Athena then transformed Odysseus into his old self, though making him, Homer tells us, even taller and handsomer than before. After the hall had been restored to its normal condition, Odysseus summoned Penelope. Seeing a man who appeared to be her husband, she was bewildered, fearing a trick. When Telemachus impatiently assured her that this man was indeed his father and her husband, she replied, "I have no strength to move. If this is in truth Odysseus, then we two have ways of knowing each other." Odysseus smiled and dismissed Telemachus, saying, "We will find each other out presently." And then, Homer tells us, there was rejoicing in the great house, for Odysseus was home at last and every heart was glad.

Using Myths in the Classroom

There we have a sampling of myths that have inspired countless novels, stories, and poems. There are, of course, an infinite number of ways to present myths. To recapitulate those already suggested, together with a few other ideas: (1) a teacher may want to retell a myth, (2) invite students to tell similar myths from their own cultural tradition, (3) ask students to write—or dramatize—their own versions of a myth, and (4) tell the beginning of a myth, inviting students to create their own conclusions. A teacher can also (5) ask students to read both prose versions of myths from various cultures as well as modern versions of the myths in prose or poetry, and (6) help students to become aware of the classical origins of plots in contemporary fiction, films, or television programs. Finally, (7) a teacher can invite students to talk and write about parallels of mythic character or plot in their own lives, for the power of myths, as we have seen, lies in providing metaphors for the human experience.

To suggest one way that might be translated into an actual course, here is a hypothetical six-unit lesson plan for using the Odyssey as the basis of a writing course:

Unit 1: Define a myth and discuss the characteristics of a mythical hero. Give the background of the Trojan War. Show how hero and quest characteristics are evident in Lotus Eaters and Cyclops episodes of The Odyssey (Book IX). Discussion and writing: "Translate" one of these episodes by creating/dramatizing your own version.

Unit 2: Read the Aeolus, Laistrygon, and Circe episodes (Book X), as well as similar myths from other cultures. Discussion and writing: What themes do these stories have in common?

Unit 3: Read the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, and cattle of Apollo episodes (Book XII), as well as similar myths from other cultures. Discussion and writing: Using the librar d and retell a myth from your own or another culture that is similar to one you have read in s course.

Unit 4: Read modern versions of a myth read in this course, e.g. Eudora Welty's "Circe" or Danny Santiago's "The Somebody." Discussion and writing: How is the modern version like and unlike the original?

Unit 5: See film version of *The Wizard of Oz* or another quest story. Discussion and writing: How does this film illustrate the elements of a quest story?

Unit 6: Read part or all of Odysseus's homecoming and dispatching of the suitors (Books XVII-XXIV) and Tennyson's poem "Ulysses." Discussion and writing: Describe a peril, or series of perils, in your own life (or the life of someone you know) that may be seen as parallel to one or more of those faced by Odysseus.

What mythological references or parallels have you noticed in your reading lately? What additional ways have you found to use myths in your teaching? How might you incorporate myths in the classes you are planning now for your fortunate students?

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Whole Brain Learning and Relaxation Techniques

by Maraleen Manos-Jones

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Why is the imagination important? It obviously plays an important part in the creative process. Is the creative process only for artists? Of course not. We all have to use our faculties of creativity and imagination to function in the world. We take in myriad pieces of information through our senses and then have to put all the information together to make sense of it. We are the creators of our lives, depending on how we edit, connect and interpret the vast array of input accosting our senses. The more flexible our imagination, the more it is possible to come up with creative ways to solve problems and to deal with the obstacles, trials and tribulations that befall us all. In fact, most discoveries came about because people were willing to look at the world in a different, creative way.

The 'I-Can't-Change' Mode

We are all imaginative as children, but as we grow older, we get stuck in patterns that don't allow us to solve problems or deal with any number of things with a fresh and different perspective. We are all creatures of pattern, from the little things in our lives to the larger picture. To prove that right now, I want you to fold your hands together, interlocking fingers. Go ahead, do it this minute! Now, I want you to change your hands so that the opposite thumb is closest to you with your fingers interlocking. Got it? Does it feel different and strange? The only reason it does, is that we are used to doing things one way and the minute we change that, it feels strange and awkward and different, and we don't like that feeling because it's too scarey so we go back to the way we always do things. That way it feels more comfortable, familiar and basically stuck. This is the "I-can't-change," or worse, "I-don't-want-to-change" mode.

What's wrong with that? Just what is wrong with doing things the same way all the time other than it's a little boring? For starters, life is not neat and predictable. Remember the saying, "expect the unexpected"? Are we ever ready for the unexpected? Is it always a surprise? The world is changing rapidly, and through technological advances we learn about changes as they're happening. But wait a minute! Basically people don't like change, because it makes us feel unsure of ourselves and our position in the world. In our ever-changing world, by tapping into and exercising our creative, imaginative selves we can feel confident that we will be capable of dealing with and improvising in unexpected situations. But how do we do that and deal with all the stress of modern living? And what does it have to do with language learning?

We know that everyone is affected by the stress of daily life. Besides normal stresses, students who have not mastered English face formidable challenges. In addition to uncertainty because of unfamiliarity, many do not have their families with them, much less their network of friends and relatives who know and respect them. I teach in New York City, one of the toughest urban settings in the world, where the students need all the tools they can get to cope with pressures. In order for deep learning to take place, tensions and stresses have to be diffused. Anxiety lowers our focus, and we miss important cues and information. This is true, of course, in any setting and true for learning any subject deeply and well. The more our energy is blocked, the less access new information has to reach us and the less ability we have to put all the information together into a clear, coherent whole.

Encouraging and nurturing the imagination is a gift to your students and yourselves. In the realm of the imagination, anything is possible. In the realm of the imagination, there is no competition. In the realm of the imagination, we don't make mistakes. In the realm of the imagination, we feel graceful and at ease. In the realm of the imagination, images perceived are powerful and transpose into the written or

spoken word or the drawn picture with a force that helps students transcend the limitations of their language abilities. It helps to stretch the ability to feel and intuitively understand image and language. It also enhances everyone's confidence level. Everyone has an imagination. How well we use it is a matter of practice. How can we practice? Consider the following two exercises.

Two Exercises

Before proceeding, it is important to describe and discuss exactly what you are going to do and review any new vocabulary. This first exercise lowers the stress level through a guided deep relaxation. There are many and various techniques to achieve relaxed states. I have found that the following, which is one of my "classics," is highly effective.

First, tell the participants they are going to imagine a beautiful place. It can be a place they know or a place they have never been before. It should, however, be a place where they feel safe, secure and calm. I find that it is important for all of us to find a quiet place within, a place that is serene and soothing to all our senses, a place to "recharge our batteries" and feel comfortable, happy and confident. It is from this calm place that we make our best decisions, and are able to clearly hear our "intuitive voice" and absorb and remember new information with more ease.

In the paragraphs that follow, is the script that I use. When everyone is familiar with the process, you can shorten and/or vary it a bit. The brain will have learned a pathway to relaxation; and the more it is used, the easier it is to get there.

The First Script

"Sit comfortably and straight in your chairs and uncross your legs. Put down pens and papers and let your hands relax. Now close your eyes. Take a deep breath in, breathing in relaxed energy and exhale, breathing out tensions and worries. Another deep breath in, taking in relaxed energy. Another exhale, breathing out problems and worries. One last deep breath in, breathing in relaxed energy; and exhale, breathing out tensions. All right, let your breath return to normal.

"And now I am going to ask you to imagine a blue white wave of relaxed energy that is going to wash over you, like a wave from the ocean. And this wave is going to gently wash over the top of your head, flowing over your forehead and over your eyes. You can feel your eyes let go of tension as this relaxed energy passes over them. And this wave of blue white energy gently slides down your cheeks, over and around your mouth and jaw and in and through your head, so that every cell in your brain is being washed in a blue white wave of relaxed light.

"And this wave of relaxed energy continues to flow down and over and through your neck, into and around your shoulders and slowly down your arms. Every muscle, bone, artery, vein and cell of your arm is being washed in a relaxed energy as this blue white wave continues down your arms, into your wrists and palms and in and through each finger.

"And now this blue white wave of relaxed energy is at the back of your neck, flowing gently down your spine, vertebrae by vertebrae and your back is being washed in a blue white relaxed light. And this relaxed energy is spreading out and over and through your shoulder blades and out and around and through your ribs and slowly and gently down, around and over your hips.

"And now this relaxed energy is at the front of your throat and is flowing slowly and thoroughly down your chest, penetrating all your internal organs, heart and lungs and intestines, all your internal organs are being washed in a blue, white, relaxed light. And as this blue white energy fills you up, it pushes tension from every part of you. And this wave of relaxed energy is spiraling gently in and around your stomach and around your hips and flows and washes down your thighs, in and around and through your thighs, around your knees, down into your legs, into your ankles and feet and into and through each toe. It continues to flow, like roots, from the bottom of your feet, through the floor, down into the earth, connecting you with the earth.

"You are now in a deep state of relaxation. I would like to remind you that everytime you are in this state, your health improves, and your ability to learn improves. In fact, your ability to learn, understand and remember your new language, English, is getting easier and better all the time. Also remember that you retain complete awareness and control throughout this exercise. You are aware of any sounds around you and anything that is happening around you. And at the same time, you are calm and relaxed within.

Manos-Jones leads the way to a beautiful place.

"Now I am going to ask you to imagine a beautiful place. It can be a place you know or a place you have never seen before. It is a place where you feel very secure and safe and calm. A place where you feel happy and centered. I would like you to wander around and explore your beautiful special place. And after you wander around, you might want to sit and just observe and be. And you will remember all the details you are going to notice. If other thoughts come into your mind, let them float by as clouds passing in the sky. They come and go.

"And now explore and be in your beautiful places until you hear my voice again."

Allow two to three minutes for everyone to explore their beautiful places.

"And now, counting from one to five, you are going to open your eyes only at the count of five—feeling wide awake, refreshed and alert. So, one, slowly coming up, feeling relaxed and calm and centered. Two, feeling lighter and filled with a gentle, yet strong energy. Three, coming up even more, feeling relaxed and refreshed. Four, feeling more awake, refreshed, relaxed and centered. Five, open your eyes, feeling wide awake, refreshed, relaxed and alert."

Describing Worlds

If you are doing this in a writing class, have the students immediately start writing about their experience, rather than disperse their energy talking. The students should write down everything they can remember. From the notes, they will develop a descriptive essay. They will be encouraged to use language to make their experience as vivid for the reader as it was for them.

If this exercise is being done in an oral skills class, I recommend that the students discuss and compare their experiences in pairs or small groups. They can also draw their beautiful places, which works wonderfully with young children.

One of my students wrote that his family and friends were in his beautiful place. His imagining was so vivid that he felt he had visited with his family, which made him very happy since he missed them so much. This simple exercise enabled him to deal with one of his pressing issues and do something positive about it. In the realm of the imagination, the possibilities are infinite.

Imaging Exercise

This next exercise, "Imaging," stimulates and utilizes the imagination. Involving imagery and dichotomies, it is a great tool for expanding vocabulary. Some researchers think that for deep learning to take place, both sides of the brain must be engaged and involved. Generally, the right side of the brain is involved in the creative, intuitive aspects; the left side is generally concerned with the logical, rational realm. If both sides of the brain are engaged in the learning of new material, understanding and retention is enhanced and accelerated.

The images for this exercise must be concrete enough to visualize. The pre-exercise is brainstorming opposites that will work. Concepts like big and small do not work. Be specific: mountain and molehill work. Purple and green work. The opposite concepts do not have to be only in the visual realm. They can stimulate the imaginary use of other senses, such as smelling a roomful of roses versus a roomful of garbage. Or in the tactile realm, imagine the feel of a butterfly's wing against your cheek versus rubbing your

hand over rough sandpaper. Or in the audio realm, imagine the sound of seagulls versus the sound of fire truck sirens.

I suggest doing about a dozen to fifteen images in a session. Save other suggestions for the next time. When the students can use their imagination more easily, you can start to layer the realms and concepts so that complex images utilizing different senses are visualized simultaneously.

The possibilities are infinite. Start out slowly and get more intricate as time goes by. Stretch the brain, and learn new vocabulary along the way. Enjoy the exercise along with your students. If you do it, you will understand the pacing necessary to imagine vividly and then move on. Here is a sample of this left/brain-right/brain exercise.

Have the students sit tall in their chairs, uncross their legs, close their eyes, and take three deep inhalations of relaxed energy and three exhalations of tension and stress.

The Second Script

"With your eyes closed, imagine looking into the left side of your brain. Let whatever image or color or symbol come to mind. Do not make judgments; just observe. Now let your attention come center. All right, now look into the right side of your brain, and notice what the right side of your brain looks like. Suspend judgment, and just observe. Let your attention come center.

"On the 'left side' of your brain imagine an elephant, and on the 'right side' of your brain imagine an ant. Now reverse that. Imagine the elephant on the right side of the brain, and the ant on the left side of the brain. All right. Now on the left side of the brain, imagine the sun and on the right side, imagine the moon. Now reverse the images so the sun is on the right side of your brain and the moon is on the left."

Of course, the teacher has to leave enough time for everyone to focus in on an image.

"Imagine a very large tree on the left side of your brain, and a small seedling with four tiny leaves on the right side of your brain. Now reverse the images. Imagine the tiny seedling on the left and the huge tree on the right. Imagine a tiny pebble on the left side of your brain, and a tall mountain on the right. Now reverse images so the pebble is on the right and the mountain is on the left. Imagine a dewdrop on the right side of your brain and a large lake on the left side of your brain. Reverse the images."

Notice that I change which side of the brain I start with, just to avoid getting caught up in a pattern.

"Imagine the sound of sirens on the right side of your brain, and on the left side of your brain imagine the sound of the wind rustling through the trees on an autumn day. Now reverse the images. On the left side of the brain, imagine the taste of a lemon, and on the right side, the taste of chocolate ice cream. Now reverse the images. On the right side of your brain imagine a sunset over the ocean; and on the left side, a sunrise over the mountains. Now reverse the images. On the left side of your brain, imagine the sound of children's laughter; and on the right side, the sound of crying. Reverse the images.

Daffodils and Snow

"Now on the left side of your brain, imagine walking through a thick forest. It is early in the morning. It is springtime, and thousands of birds are singing sweet songs. Thousands of bright yellow daffodils fill a meadow in the middle of the woods. You feel very peaceful. On the right side of your brain, imagine you are walking in the winter in a snowstorm—the only sound is the wind, the snow is a white blanket over everything. You feel very cold. Now reverse images.

A Beautiful Island

"Imagine on the right side of your brain, that you are on the most incredible vacation of your life. You are captain of a beautiful yacht, and all your best friends are with you. The sun is shining and shimmering on a blue/green ocean near an island. The island is not far, and the island is covered with wild roses. The smell of the wild, fresh, spring roses is mingling with the smell of the salty, briney sea. The air is clear. Seagulls are flying low looking for fish, and

they are cawing and calling to one another. The sound of the waves is rhythmic and soothing. You can feel the ocean breeze against your skin . The sun feels comfortably warm as you are enjoying an exquisite lunch with your friends. You feel extraordinarily happy, peaceful, relaxed and that all is well in heaven and on earth.

"On the left side of the brain, imagine walking along the shore; you are alone; it is raining and you are in a gloomy, reflective mood. The seagulls are crying. The waves are crashing and the cold ocean spray is hitting your face. It is night. The clouds are mostly covering the moon, which peeks out; the dark clouds are running mythical shapes in front of the moon's cool blue white light. There is low fog along the beach. You feel sad and lonely. Then reverse images to opposite sides of the brain. So that now the sad image is on the right, and the joyful experience is on the left.

"Now clearing your mind of images, I would like you to look up into the left side of your brain, and notice what the left side of your brain looks like. Suspend judgement and just let whatever image come to you. It could be a color, or a symbol, just let whatever it is come to mind. And now let your attention return to center. Now look into the right side of your brain and notice what the right side of your brain looks like. Let your attention return to center. Now slowly opening your eyes, feeling awake, aware and refreshed. Open your eyes."

Discussion

Discussion always follows any exercise. You can also encourage picking a favorite image, drawing it, writing about it and evolving it. Ask if the images on the left and right brains were different at the beginning of the exercise and at the end. Also, I always share my left and right brain images because the students feel unsure and shy about what they've experienced. They need to be assured that there is no "right" and "wrong." Every image is valid, and images totally vary. However, a typical image is one side of the brain more filled with light and a different color than the other. Sometimes the light and color are balanced. In addition, images of our brain change from day to day or vary within a twenty-four-hour period. It depends on cycles and stimulation. It is interesting and important to "keep in touch with, check into and look at" our brains from time to time. In my forthcoming book, I will offer other ways to have dialogue with and stimulate the brain.

The idea of this and other right brain/left brain exercises is to stimulate the firing of brain cells so that both sides of our brains are functioning more optimally. The brain is designed to respond to stimulation and expand its powers to meet new challenges. We usually feel a little different after doing any excerise that allows us to focus our attention. When we are not focused, we don't take in all information being offered because we are distracted. Our minds wander or fuss or worry. Here, we're learning relaxed attentiveness as well as tickling our imagination, both essential if deep learning is to take place.

Relax, have fun, explore and learn—not a bad motto to teach by.

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Storytelling:
A Way of Freeing the Imagination

An Interview with Dvora Shurman
by Tova Ackerman

Dvora Shurman is an American, retired and living in Israel. Shurman, who founded the Lillian Oppenheimer English Storytelling Center in Tel Aviv, is experimenting with innovative approaches to learning. She is well known in Israel and internationally for the teacher training seminars that she conducts.

Tova Ackerman, director of the Puppetry in Practice Center at Brooklyn College, interviewed Ms. Shurman in January, 1994.

JILL: How do you use storytelling in teaching language?
SHURMAN: I use it simply. Telling stories in the classroom makes the experience of listening to a newly acquired language both pleasant and productive. Students enjoy listening to stories; they experience emotions as they identify with characters and wonder if the hero will escape or be eaten. Listening to stories in a second language drives the listener to understand a plot, rather than individual words. The puzzle pieces easily fall into place. The best way to teach is not to impose teaching, but to allow the listener to become so involved in hearing a story that his "defenses" are no longer active. He is not bored. The listener is driven, prodded by his curiousity, imagining what may come.
JILL: What stories do you tell children?
SHURMAN: Folk tales make the best material, for they have a deep relation to every aspect of a child's life. Psychiatrist Bruno Bettelheim studied Oedipal aspects of fairy tales, partly because the themes of wicked stepmothers and sibling rivalry appear in every culture. Aesop's animal fables, rooted in African lore, illustrate values and morals. In olden times, children heard stories when their parents brought them along to listen to the Wise Man or the Wise Woman, Medicine Man, Preacher or Sage. Stories were not designed for children to understand; they held messages for the tribe or group as a whole. And the children absorbed the messages though the story.

Rascal stories, in which the mischief-maker wins out over the staid, overbearing "enemy," are lovely for small children who feel bossed and dominated by large adults. Peter Rabbit, Brer Rabbit, and Coyote stories are examples. The film cartoon character of "Wily Coyote" is adapted from Native American trickster legends.

Using folk tales in the classroom is easy. The children have already had many such tales read to them in their native tongue; they have read them, seen them on TV and—on videotapes—over and over. They have accumulated formats which apply to any language: hero, villain, quest, danger, solution—it is simple form. Of course we have quests with failures along the way, but language learning begins in the simpler format. The pattern transfers to the new language, as a kind of "grammatical structure."

There is a place for more complex stories in a coordinated curriculum. An African tale from the Segu tribe illustrates this point. Kone, an old widow with a beautiful granddaughter, is supported by her village tribe, but in a time of drought they leave her to starve. She works magic and becomes a rhinoceros, a second Self which creates havoc among the village hunters. As the story develops, compassion saves the day, but the lessons absorbed are not a morality tale or fable. Along the way, the listener has absorbed the culture, the traditions, the geography, the economy—an all-inclusive picture of an African community in its jungle ecosystem.
JILL: What was your training in this approach to education?
SHURMAN: Perhaps I was born into it, for I had to be the voice of and for my deaf parents. I had uncles who wrote and told stories, and a father with a wild sense of humor. I would add humor to emotion as elements of learning.

My formal education? I was a foreign language teacher, majoring in Spanish, and minoring in ESL, which I taught in Israeli high schools. After I retired, Joseph Lukinsky, Professor of Education at Colum-

NOTE: *This interview was conducted by Dr. Ackerman for* The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning (JILL). *Copyright inquiries should be directed to Dr. Ackerman.*

bia Teachers College and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, led me to professors and institutions teaching and modeling different techniques of using stories in life experience, whether it's called teaching, psychology, or performance. In 1987, I became formally involved with storytelling in the New York City Storytelling Center and the Jewish Storytelling Center at the Lexington Y.

But storytelling is not limited to the printed and spoken word. I also learned Dr. Ira Progoff's *Intensive Journal® Method*, which provides tools to access the stories within our lives. This method makes use of a structured Journal notebook, with over 20 sections and subsections, and six colors for the dividers. Each section deals with a different type of narrative, such as "Experiences at School" and "Close Friends." The formal structure releases imagination in several ways. For example, it averts a tendency to go around in circles in keeping a diary; and the format still remains open, like a book. It has been used successfully in many school settings, for each of its sections can lead to deepening and opening of both the use of language and of understanding.

A grandmother told of her seven-year-old grand-daughter who came home with a notebook in three sections. The child was already in touch with the various aspects of her self, of writing, of memory and use of language. She said her grandmother would have to help her with the part about her life, for she would not remember it all. She said the main part would be things that happen and stories she would write for school, but the last section would just be "nothing special." Queried by grandmother, she specified, "Just thoughts and maybe poems and songs and dreams." I call this reaching the goals we don't know we have.

So there it is—a journal with different ways to approach our life, from the past, the present, and the inner life. This is a simplified version of the Journal, adapted for early language learning, and reaching within the child for inspiration. That inspiration is allowed to come, naturally, within the specific framework of the Journal, for we need not limit imagination. If the topic is "A Dialog with Mother" [or with wisdom or a hero we are studying], the "mother/wisdom/ hero persona" can express anything. We need not fear or limit our writing. We metaphorically "give the pen to the personna and let it write." Thus we escape any constraints on our own imagination, for "someone else" has been separated from us, like an actor on a stage, and that someone may say what he wishes.

Children who keep the journals in elementary school enjoy—no, *love* to write. Students in higher grades reach such deep understanding of the historical figures whom they study and then give their own voice, that the teachers are amazed. Even at university level, Professor Joseph Lukinsky tells of a student who identified with the rabbi-philosopher A. J. Heschel completely, because the student, like Heschel, was a refugee from Europe, and could "understand" his subject from within his own life experience.

It is difficult to define hard borders between teaching, storytelling, writing and psychology; perhaps they will soon fall. These fields of study have become integrated naturally in my work —and my life.

I also trained to be a "Mimesis" leader with Professor Sam Lauchli of Temple University, and his wife, Dr. Evelyn Rothschild, a family therapist. Lauchli, a professor of religion whose origins are Swiss, derived his technique out of his teaching of comparative religions, their myths and legends, and the work of Karl Jung, Joseph Campbell, and folklorists and researchers into story and religion. We learned to "play" stories in methods derived from "psycho-drama." As we rewrite myths, legends and fairy tales for our time, as we take a role and "enter" a story, it becomes clear that the traditional myths and themes are universal. The "playing," like the journaling, creates a personna, a role we play which allows us to "be someone else."

But our self identifies with the role. No wonder Jung proposed that we knew ancient legends before we were born. We also have within us stories from every encounter with anyone who has ever been a part of our lives. A veritable treasury that awakens when we allow ourselves to "play," freeing our self unconsciously in the use of imagination. Students of drama? Peter Pitzele is another teacher who uses drama to work with the mentally ill, through stories. School counselors, teachers of special education, and physical therapists, as well as drama coaches, can reach students through this way of entering stories. Ms. Sally Smith, mother of a learning-disabled child, discovered that she could use music, rhythm, movement and

storytelling to awaken her child's latent capabilities. "He can't spell C-A-T, but he can tell you a Navajo legend," Ms. Smith said.

These varied approaches to storytelling all use imagination in many ways. They can also complement one another. I have seen many budding writers and painters who first awaken to their inner artists through this work.

JILL: Is storytelling best with young children?

SHURMAN: No, not necessarily. Stories are powerful and can even change lives. As classroom adviser to a 12th grade class, I encouraged the students to tell stories of their lives which, in turn, helped them make decisions about the future, and accept the inevitability of army service, or whatever lay ahead. A 12th grade girl, on the threshold of graduation, was sure that the only thing she wanted was to get married. But she worked through two days of journaling, "talked with work," and realized she wanted to be a teacher. She went on to teacher's college, even after she married two years later.

My latest experience—I have them frequently—was with an adult, who had never had formal education, because of illness and her status as a refugee. Trying to learn a foreign language, Hebrew, she would read a word or sentence and tell herself: "I am not going to remember that." She succeeded very well in following her instructions. I suggested, playfully, that she leave out the word "not," and she retained her knowledge. We did it as a game, a story. Not only has she found a way to language learning, she sees that her learning is connected to her perception of herself. Her imagination had been non-productive and negating; she could not imagine herself speaking another language. That might be the subject of a very long article!

In upper grades, I teach students to tell stories, as well as to listen; the storytelling process serves as a vehicle for cognitive thinking—recalling, learning, and re-viewing the stories, where we are in our lives. So imagination is also the key to reaching memories. Instead of saying, "We will learn so-and-so today," we let the story carry the listeners into their own learning process.

JILL: Are you talking about freeing creativity?

SHURMAN: No, about developing order, structure, and discipline! First of all, for the teacher/teller: to tell a story one has to learn and remember it, understand its structure, its inner meaning, its personal meaning and the relation of the story to the children's lives and learning. In Israel, this has been a crucial element in my teaching after terror attacks and during wars.

During the Gulf War, I went back to work as a substitute teacher, for I knew many teachers had fled the country. I was given fourteen art classes, first through eighth grade, although I am not an "art teacher." I can elicit art through storytelling, and did so, choosing stories appropriate to expressing their fears and terror. I adapted a classic story, "The Rabbi and the Goat," and brought it from a European village to an apartment near the school. In the adapted ending, with the goat in the sealed room in which we waited for Scuds to fall, we discovered that even a gas mask is of no use against the imagined smell of a goat. Humor changed fear to a story they loved, a story they drew repeatedly and wanted to hear again and again, even in the upper grades.

JILL: Do you use specific learning devices?

SHURMAN: Humor, of course, and repetition, especially a rhythm or tune, to enhance memorization. Listening comprehension and memory free the listener's imagination. Sometimes I begin with a theme, then toss it out for the others to pick up. One time we told stories of forgetting things, and everyone had a story to tell. It's just for fun, but the process carried us to stories we did not know we knew.

Then I control the speed of the storytelling according to how well the children seem to be comprehending. I may go back, slow down, ask questions to stimulate. None of this would be possible if I were tied to reading a text. I can watch as I tell. I can let the students repeat refrains. I can have characters, usually animals, repeat the same basic script.

My favorite repetition stories come from Africa. Elsa Joubert, a grandmother in South Africa, adapted some—like "The Peanut Boy"—for her own grandchildren. Don't let your imagination limit this story to a lower grade, for even adults love it. It works well in language classes. It becomes a game, as students

repeat it faster and faster, shouting out the repetitions with the teacher. In the end, I can just hint, and the students tell it themselves. Yes, the simplest tools are sometimes the best. This is a concise version:

> Deep in the African jungle, a little boy tells his fisherman father: "I'm going to hide, and you won't find me."
>
> "I'll find you," says his father, and the little boy goes off. He finds a peanut skin, makes himself very small, crawls inside, and falls asleep.
>
> A wood hen comes, swallows him, and is in turn swallowed by a wildcat, swallowed in turn by a wild dog, a panther, and an enormous river snake. The snake swims into a fishing net and is captured and then cut open. Each animal is revealed in turn, and the students repeat the progression of animals backwards.
>
> The fisherman finally reaches the peanut, opens it, and says to the surprised boy, "I told you I'd find you."

The teacher can use as many animals as she/he wishes, and as much or as a little detail as is required. The script lends itself to drawing, and to all the arts, even melodies for the animals to sing. It is an elastic story!

JILL: Do you always tell folk stories?

SHURMAN: My best stories are my own. I believe the greatest storytelling is being able to reach the stories within our lives. They become like a giant puzzle, the parts connecting in various ways to create a "new life."

JILL: That does not sound imaginative. Is this therapy?

SHURMAN: I "allow" students to work "creatively" and freely, using breathing exercises and movement first, to disconnect from the distractions of what we bring with us as we enter the stories. They focus on breathing, and let anything happen. This is the depth side of another phase of the work I do, based on Dr. Ira Progoff's Depth Psychology [developed in his books, *The Death and Rebirth of Psychology* and *Depth Psychology and Modern Man*, (1958 through 1963) and *At a Journal Workshop*, (revised in 1993), all published by or available through Dialog House Library, New York.

The root word of psychology, "Psyche" in Greek, is the soul, not the mind; and my work with stories has an aspect of Eastern practices in this releasing of learning. I don't use or seek imagination as a specific goal. I free it, as we get involved in the story, forgetting ourselves and our classroom. We enter the stories and escape constraints on our thinking.

"Therapy?" I did use stories in the classrooms as a tool to handle the terrible consequences of the Gulf War, but I prefer to call it "identification." I was assigned a school with classes from first through eighth grade. They were "exceptional" students from both ends of the spectrum of capability. All these children were either bombed out of their own homes or watched a neighbor's home being demolished by a missile. They entered the stories, to be freed of tension, or went beyond them with fantasy. That's normal behavior.

Creativity and imagination are not to be understood to mean that we just let go of constraints and "let it happen." It is a misconception that creativity or imagination is a function separate from reason and analysis. Rules apply to the use of the imagination in language learning just as they do to science and geography.

I "teach" indirectly. I give the participant/learner techniques to learn by himself. I am there to guide and inspire.

We free our capacity to learn and to understand by focusing on the story, as we enjoy and are excited by it. Our emotions help us learn. Dr. Paul Dennison, an educator, developed a Shiatsu-based system of working with dyslexic children and called it "Brain Gym." It is a series of yoga-based exercises chosen for their effect on various aspects of learning [*Brain Gym*, Glendale CA, Edu-Kinesthetics, 1986]. He showed that the "trying" process blocks learning. We turn off the process of thinking; we bring it to a stop when we focus on "trying" rather than on what we wish to know or understand. It's like what happens

when we misplace something, and can't find it until we stop looking. So we allow stories themselves to be vehicles for learning.

JILL: Do you mean by telling stories?

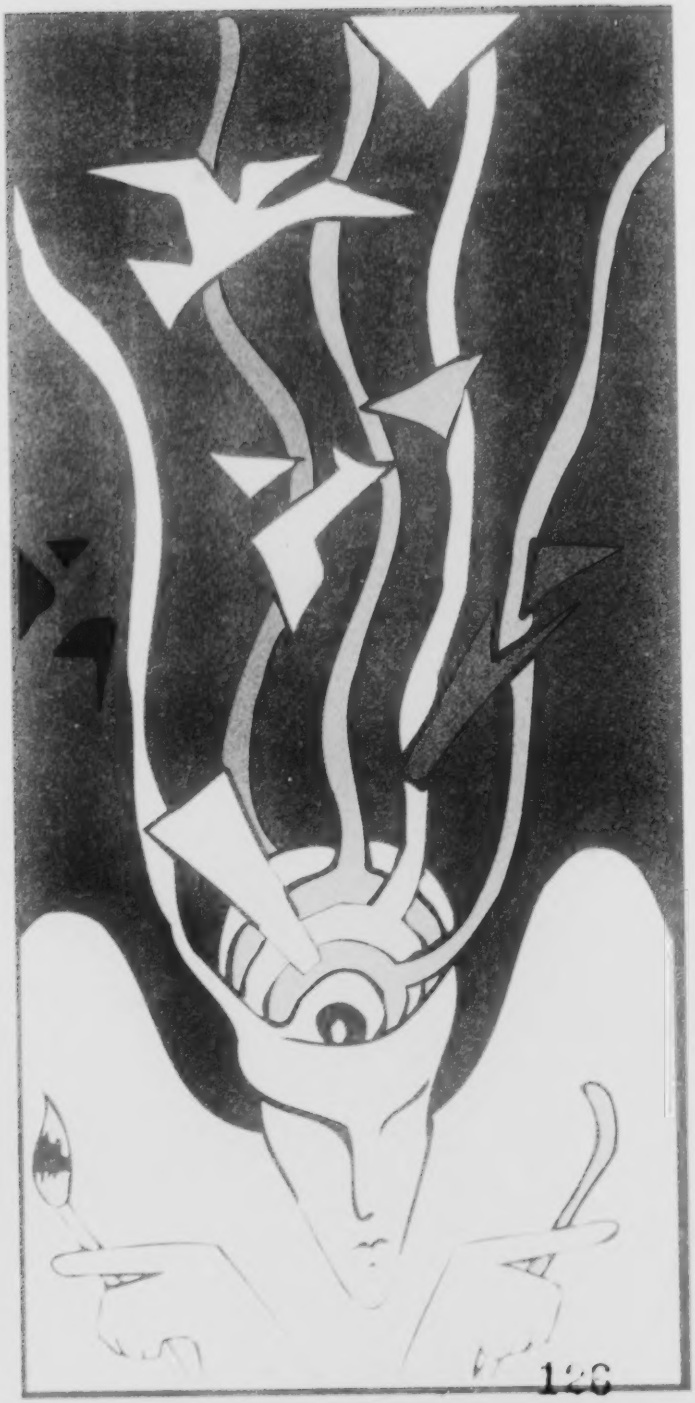
SHURMAN: "Telling" requires a listener! So storytelling is basically a dialogue, with the listener. A boy in California came up to a storyteller after a program, touched his arm, and said in surprise: "You're round!" Not just an electronic device that tells stories but doesn't know the little boy exists. My friend, Joseph the Storyteller, says he has all the stories he ever learned in his head, to suit whatever audience he finds. A story is not separate from the teller; it becomes his own when he tells it. He knows what stories to tell, letting story and audience seek and meet each other. The teller hears the listeners, too.

When storyholder Teresa Pijoan learned to be a Pueblo storyholder, the process took nearly 20 years. First she had to learn all the traditional Pueblo stories, the same stories as told by each of eight other storyholders. After her initiation, she had to tell each story in her version, compiling those of the older holders out of her own understanding of the traditional story, which would be the stories retold for her generation. [This is a principle of Dr. Ackerman's work at the *Puppetry in Practice* Center in Brooklyn College.]

JILL: This sounds like work, too practical to be imagination.

SHURMAN: Society has defined imagination as impractical. But we use it every moment of the day, making choices. Even setting one foot in front of the other requires imagining where we want to go and what we will do when we get there. Imagination is the basis of all our lives, no matter how humdrum they seem. That only happens when we ignore what we are really seeking, when we put aside "trying" to "teach" structured learning. We want to go further, enhance learning possibilities.

This is not a prescription or formula, nor a set of rules. I hope you understood what not to do. Let learning—through storytelling—happen, enhanced by joy and excitement.



Story Tails

by John Dumicich and Christine B. Root

John Dumicich is an adjunct associate professor of ESL at the American Language Institute and also teaches at Hunter College, City University of New York. He has done extensive teacher training in language acquisition for the United States Information Agency in Eastern Europe and Pakistan.

Christine B. Root is a teaching fellow in ESL at Harvard University. She is the co-author with Karen Blanchard of Ready to Write *(Longman), with Tsukasa Matsui of* Campus Life USA *(Kinseido), and with William Grohe of* Speaking Globally: English in an International Context *(Prentice-Hall).*

For many students, revision is one of the most difficult aspects of the writing process. Whether it is because of laziness, frustration, or a sense of already having written, it has been our experience that students fight the idea of revising their written drafts.

In the steps of the writing process, brainstorming can be fun and lively; writing the first draft takes work, but students seem to understand that producing a written product is a vehicle for experimentation with their new language. Beyond this point, however, the writing process often seems to break down. To encourage students to consider and reconsider their written drafts, we have found that the following activity, which we call "Story Tails," instills in students an awareness that a piece of writing can and should be viewed and reviewed for both content and mechanics.

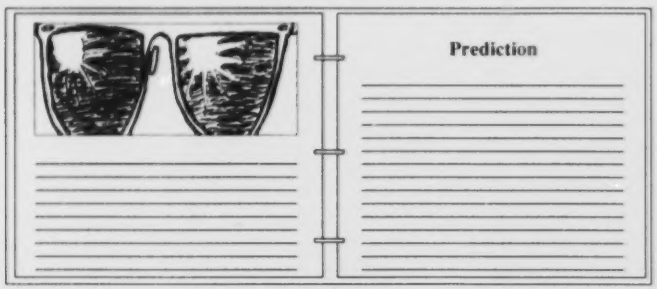
Story Tails call on students to (1) "associate" their ideas to the picture, i.e. write about themselves using ideas merely suggested by very simple drawings, and (2) "connect" what they wrote about one picture to what they write about another picture, i.e. use the continuation of the drawings to rethink, expand, revise and rewrite their pieces many times over. The activity capitalizes on the considerable value that research shows can be derived from playing on interconnections between images and words.

The idea for Story Tails was inspired by Crockett Johnson's charming children's book, *Harold and the Purple Crayon.* It tells the story of a small boy named Harold who, holding firmly onto a purple crayon, makes a very simple line drawing of whatever it is he wants or needs as he moves through the pages of the book. Finding himself in water over his head, for example, Harold draws himself a boat and climbs aboard it. When lost, he draws a policeman to point him on his way. Having just launched *Drawing on Experience* (JILL, 1993) in which students are called upon to write from their own drawings, we were captivated by Harold and the possibilities that his techniques for changing his environment inspire complementary to drawing and writing activities.

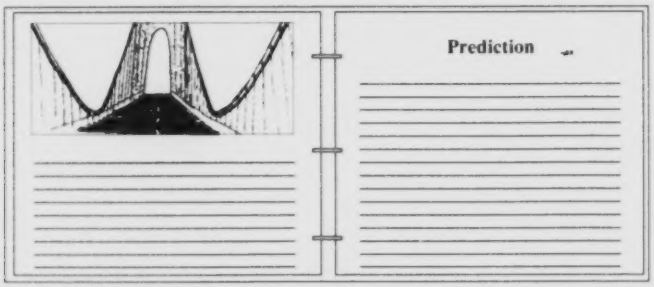
Having let the visuals and story lines of Harold percolate for awhile, we hit upon the idea of Story Tails as a way to engage ESL students. Using prompts from which they can write and rewrite their own stories, students are given the opportunity to practice verb tense dexterity as well as work on their revision skills.

We have found the following Story Tail to work very well. Instruct students as follows:

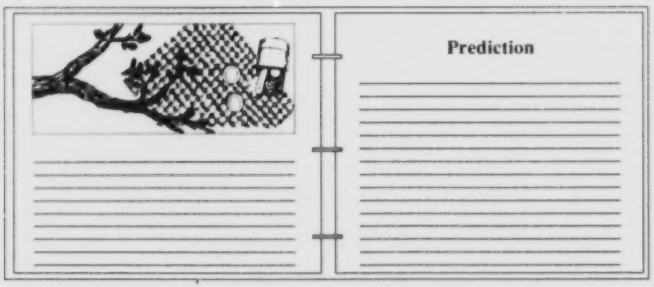
> ***A.*** You are going to write a story about yourself using the drawings below to give you ideas. (Each drawing is at the top of the page on the left side of a ring binder. Under it are blank lines. On the page at the right in the binder, there are also blank lines under a one-word heading: "PREDICTION".) The arrangement is as follows:



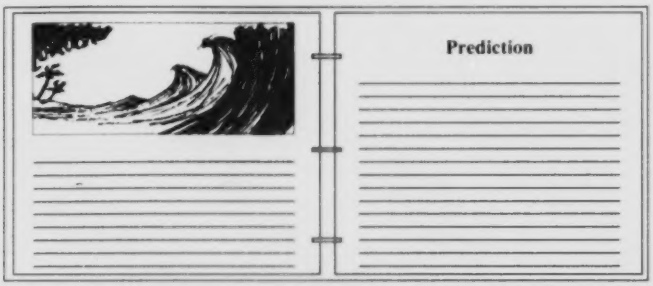
B. Look at the first drawing. Use the space below it to write about where you are and what you are doing. Base your writing on the thoughts that the drawing triggers in your mind.



C. Using the space on the opposing page, use your imagination to predict what you will do or what will happen in the next drawing.



D. Turn the page and look at the next drawing. Revise your story, if you need to, based on this additional visual. You can keep or change any parts of your story that you want.

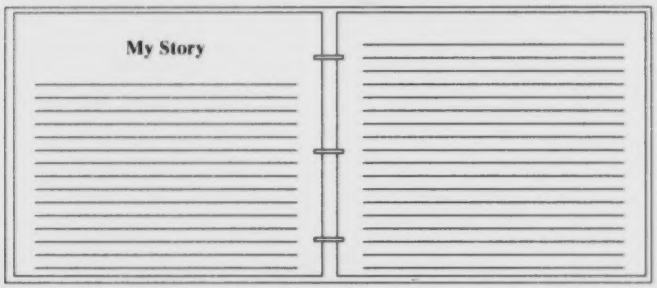


E. Continue the same procedure throughout the Story Tail. Use the pages on the right for your predictions, and the pictures and spaces on the left to revise your story.

F. Review your previous stories. Then revise and make the final changes.

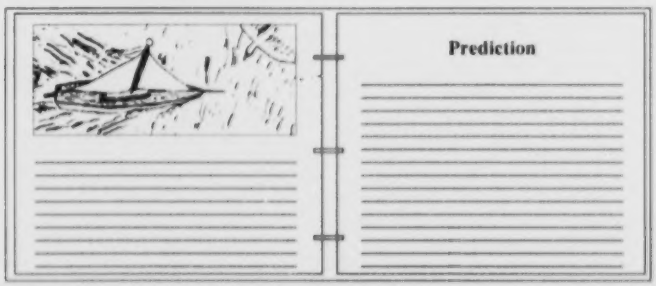
EDITOR'S NOTE: *The artist, authors, and* JILL *give permission to copy the drawings, which were made by James Russell.*
The textbook, Drawing on Experience, *by John Dumicich and Christine Root will be published by M'Graw-Hill in 1995.*

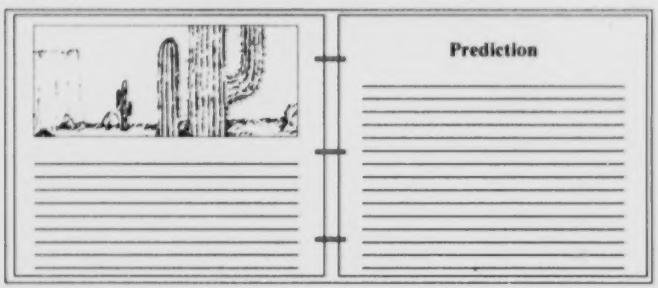
G. Write your complete story on the last page. Don't forget to include a conclusion.



H. Think of a good title for your story. Write it at the top of your story .

Other Possible Starting Points





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Reading for Pleasure:
Short Novels In Academic University ESL Programs

by Christine F. Meloni

Dr. Christine F. Meloni is an associate professor of English as a Foreign Language at The George Washington University in Washington, DC. She is co-author of Say The Right Thing: A Functional Approach to Developing Speaking Skills *(Addison-Wesley) and author of articles on second language teaching and learning. Her current areas of special interest are the use of literature and films in teaching reading and the use of electronic mail in developing writing skills.*

"No Pain, No Gain"

We hear this slogan often today. We are persuaded that our bodies will not be fit unless we subject them to exercise that we really do not enjoy but know will have beneficial results. We hear over and over again that, in order to succeed at anything, we will need to engage in a lot of hard, unpleasant work.

Too often this is the unspoken slogan in the foreign language classroom. In order to become better readers, students must take a piece of writing and work on it. They will be asked to skim the passage for the main idea, to scan it for specific information, to search it for topic sentences, to paraphrase it, to summarize it, to infer this, to analyze that. It is definitely not fun; it is work.

At the end of the course are the students better readers? According to experts like Steven Krashen, this method of teaching reading is not effective. Krashen (1994) contends that, strange as it may seem, the more students enjoy their reading assignments, the more they improve their language ability. He suggests, therefore, that we take into serious consideration "the pleasure hypothesis." Why don't we give students opportunities for extensive reading so that they will be able to find enjoyment in their assignments?

The evidence is beginning to accumulate that students who do extensive reading for pleasure improve their reading skills faster than those who focus on intensive reading. In their 1992 article in *College ESL*, "Let Them Read Books," Martino and Block cite studies in which students who are in courses where extensive reading is done perform better on reading tests than students who are in courses that focus on skill-building strategies.

For several years in my higher-intermediate EFL class (TOEFL scores ranging from 450-500), I used a reading text similar to many on the market which contained short readings of one to three pages on topics related to a variety of academic disciplines; each reading was followed by numerous pages of skill-building exercises. The students did a lot of skills practice and very little actual reading. In order to increase the amount of reading and to provide more interesting content, I decided to supplement the textbook with a work of literature, a short novel. I noticed immediately that the students were more motivated to do their reading assignments and that their reading habits began to change. They read their assignments more eagerly and were filled with anticipation about what was to follow. They also began to worry less about the meaning of each word as they focused on the overall meaning. Therefore, the following semester I eliminated the textbook; since then, novels and short stories have constituted the core of the course, supplemented with films and non-fiction materials (largely magazine and journal articles) relevant to the literary themes.

However, from conversations I have had with colleagues at universities throughout the United States, resistance to the use of literature is quite strong although it is obviously weakening as a perusal of presentation titles in recent TESOL convention programs will affirm. When the possibility of using literature is mentioned, the response is frequently something like:

> "Oh, no! We must give the students 'academic' readings. Literature will be of no use. The language will be too literary, not practical or relevant to what the students are doing."

How can one respond to this criticism? Let's consider three basic reasons for introducing literature.

Why Literature?

A. Linguistic Reasons: Many writers point out that literature can serve as a linguistic model. Povey (1979) makes an observation of timeless relevance:

> Literature gives evidence of the widest variety of syntax, the richest variations of vocabulary discrimination. It provides examples of the language employed at its most effective, subtle, and suggestive. (p. 162)

Sage (1987) comments on the use of communicative strategies in literature:

> Through literature, sooner or later, the student encounters nearly every kind of communicative technique speakers use or think of using. Literature displays a broader range of such communication strategies than any other single ESL teaching component. (p. 6).

B. Cognitive Reasons: In addition to helping the students learn more about the target language, literature can help students to develop critical thinking skills as they ponder the issues raised in the text and examine their own feelings in regard to them. Assignments can be given which require creative, original thinking. Students are required to relate their own thoughts and positions and cannot merely parrot back what the instructor has said.

C. Aesthetic Reasons: In addition to the more practical reasons, McConochie (1982) points out that students deserve to know that English can be a beautiful language. They should be allowed to encounter the language at its best, to see how outstanding writers have made use of the words of English to describe places and events and to express human feelings. They should also hear the beauty of the sounds of English. Literature can be read aloud very effectively and can give the students a real sense of the powerful beauty of English.

Which Literary Form?

If one decides to include literature in the curriculum, what literary form should one choose? I personally like to use short novels, short stories, and an occasional poem. When I first began to use literature in order to engage the students in longer readings, I began with novels. My first choice was Orwell's *Animal Farm* which I have since used several times. When I taught a technical reading course, I used Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. I have also used Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, and Christy's *And Then There Were None* which are all approximately 100 pages, which I consider an ideal length. (See the Appendix for a list of additional novels that colleagues have used with success.)

Why Short Novels?

Why did I decide to use a short novel? I had three basic reasons: content continuity, motivation, and vocabulary development.

A. Content Continuity: One of my principal objections to the readings in the standard reading texts was their extreme brevity. A short novel, on the other hand, has from 100 to 200 pages. *Animal Farm*, for example, is divided into ten chapters and has a total of 128 pages in the Signet Classic edition. A work of this length can provide many lessons over several weeks and offer valuable continuity of content. In any academic courses that our students will take—whether history, anthropology, literature, or chemistry—there will be continuity of content. In ESL/EFL reading texts, however, there are often artificial and frustrating leaps from one subject to another.

B. Motivation: When I tell students at the beginning of the semester that they will be reading entire books, they can hardly believe their ears. Most of them have never read a book in English and consider it an exciting challenge. The fact that these books are not texts adapted and prepared for learners of English but rather written for native speakers is highly motivating.

Students particularly enjoy books that native speakers are currently reading. *Animal Farm* is a popular classic which is found in virtually any bookstore in the United States. It is frequently used in English literature and political science courses, and the sentence "All animals are equal but some are more equal

than others" is widely quoted. Books currently on best seller lists are very motivating. I now include at least one current best seller in my course syllabus. This past semester, my students read *The Joy Luck Club* and the non-fiction book *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, both best-sellers and the former also very popular in its recently released film version.

Dr. Meloni discusses Animal Farm *with students from Taiwain and Japan.*

C. Vocabulary Development: It is a well-known fact that there is a strong correlation between the amount of reading individuals do and the size of their vocabulary. Students should, therefore, be given a great deal of material to read. No matter how many words an instructor teaches (or attempts to teach) in the classroom, the number learned will never equal what a student can learn by reading extensively.

When I ask my students to evaluate their experience reading novels, they all inevitably mention the great increase in the size of their vocabulary as one of the major advantages. Because of their need to create images in the reader's mind, authors of works of fiction generally use a much greater variety of words than writers of non-fiction.

Students also note that, while reading novels, they learn how to use their dictionaries much more effectively. Because they are focusing on the overall meaning of what they are reading, they stop looking up every unknown word that they encounter. A Japanese student wrote the following comment in her reading journal in regard to her dictionary habits:

> I was a dictionary person until Chapter 5 [of *Animal Farm*]. Whenever I found unknown words, I used to look them up in a dictionary, and write them in my vocabulary notebook. ...But I gradually came not to care which words I didn't know. I learned very well how to read English book from reading *Animal Farm*. (K. Adachi)

How to Choose Novels for the Classroom?

I have a checklist of criteria that I use when I am looking for an appropriate novel to include in my course syllabus.

1. Length of novel: I personally think that 100-150 pages is an ideal length, particularly at the higher-intermediate level. I have found that my students feel comfortable reading 10-15 pages per night (although at first they find it truly overwhelming). At this rate a book can be covered in approximately 7-10 lessons. If more than ten lessons are spent on a single book, students' attention often begins to waver. If a book, however, contains a lot of dialogue, the students can read more rapidly and, therefore, a book of 200-250 pages might not be too long to cover in ten lessons.

2. Language: Finding a novel written for native speakers that higher-intermediate ESL/EFL students can read with relative ease is not easy. The language should be a bit challenging, of course, in order for the students to progress to another level of reading comprehension, but it should not be anywhere near the frustration level. Although "scientific" tests of reading difficulty can be applied to a text, experienced teachers should be able to gauge what their students can and cannot read.

3. Available film or video: I like to select novels that have films based on them. I recommend that students read the novel first. I have found that, if they view the film prior to reading the book, they are unable to interact creatively with the text because their imagination is severely hampered. They may lose all interest in the book after the possibility to create and the element of anticipation are destroyed.

One of my students confessed that she had viewed the *Animal Farm* film after reading only a few chapters of the book. She found the book less interesting because she was robbed of the opportunity of creating images of the animals in her mind.

Watching a film after reading a book is usually a very satisfying and enjoyable experience. When reading the novel before seeing the film, most of my students say that they prefer the book version.

I also like to show my students films on related themes. These films may be educational films or feature films. It helps develop the students critical thinking skills to find commonalities among the readings

and the films and to synthesize the knowledge. After reading *The Joy Luck Club*, for example, my students viewed two films, the film version of the book and a feature film entitled "A China Wall." The theme of both is the clashing of Chinese and American cultures.

4. Action versus Description: Ideally, there should be more action than description in the novel. Novels with a considerable amount of description usually tend to bore the students. One notable exception that I have found is Steinbeck's *The Pearl* which contains a great deal of description; most students find that description extremely beautiful and enjoy the novel.

5. Appeal to students' taste: Instructors must, of course, consider the students' tastes. What are the ages of the students? C.S. Lewis' wonderful classic *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* might be appreciated by undergraduates but not by graduate students. What are their majors? If the students are majoring in engineering or computer science, they would most likely find *2001: A Space Odyssey* fascinating. What are their nationalities? If they are Asians, *The Joy Luck Club* would probably be read with keen interest. It is, of course, to be expected that, whatever novel is chosen, not all of the students will find it to their liking.

6. Appeal to instructor's taste: The instructor must feel comfortable with the novel to be taught. As all instructors know, it is very difficult to teach a course with materials not compatible with one's teaching philosophy or with one's personality. Recently, I was strongly encouraged by several colleagues to adopt Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Although it is definitely a great novel and has been enjoyed by many students and instructors, I was too disturbed by the tragic ending to consider adding it to my syllabus.

7. Size of print: It is frustrating to read a foreign language in small print, especially if the alphabet is different from one's own. I prefer to remove any obstacles to reading enjoyment that I can, and I, therefore, insist on normal print. (I also always steer clear of paperback dictionaries that have many words but tiny print.)

8. Price of book: The cost of the book should not be excessive. One usual advantage of a popular novel is its price. Paperback novels are usually considerably less expensive than the average textbook.

Conclusion

Krashen has argued that plenty of comprehensible input may be the most important factor in second language acquisition. We, therefore, need to provide as much input as we can. Novels that are well chosen offer an excellent source of "plenty of comprehensible input."

While reading novels, students focus on content and develop fluency. They begin to enjoy reading; most of them up until this point have found reading in English a difficult chore, definitely not enjoyable. By reading and understanding longer readings, they increase their self-confidence. Literature should have a very important place in the ESL/EFL curriculum. Students can make great strides in acquiring a language through extensive reading of literature.

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Students listen in rapt attention during a discussion of totalitarianism.

Appendix

May We Suggest ... ?

2001: A Space Odyssey by Arthur Clarke
The Accidental Tourist by Anne Tyler
Animal Farm by George Orwell
Annie John by Jamaica Kincaid
Breaking Away by Steve Tesich
Bridge to Terebithia by Katherine Patterson
Chain Letter by Christopher Pike
Death of Jim Loney by James Welch
Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank
Everything I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten by Robert Fulgham
Farenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes
Frankenstein by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley
Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe by Fannie Flagg
I Am One of You Forever by Fred Chappell
Island of the Dolphins by Scott O'Dell
Laughing Boy by Oliver La Farge
Momo by Michael Ende
Iacocca: An Autobiography by Lee A. Iacocca
Iron and Silk by Martin Salzman
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade by Les Martin
Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
The Pearl by John Steinbeck
Peter Pan by J. M. Barrie
Restaurant at the End of the Universe by Douglas Adams
A River Runs through It by Norman Maclean
Room with a View by E.M. Forster
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead by Tom Stoppard
School Ties by William Boyd
Single White Female by John Lutz
Snow Goose by Paul Gallico
To Kill a Mockingbird by Lee Harper
Way to Rainy Mountain by N. Scott Momaday
Winter in the Blood by James Welch
Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
A Zoo in my Luggage by Gerald Malcolm Durrell
Plays by Ray Bradbury

Note: *Many of the titles listed above were suggested by my colleagues on the TESL-L List. I gratefully acknowledge their suggestions. Note that a few of the titles are not short novels but non-fiction.*

Rock Poetry: The Literature Our Students Listen To

Claudia Ferradas Moi is head of studies at the T.S. Eliot Bilingual Studies Center in Banfield, Argentina, and lecturer in Contemporary English Literature at the National Training College for Teachers and Translators (I.N.E.S. en Lenguas Vivas) in Buenos Aires. She has presented on EFL and English literature at many conferences, including TESOL Baltimore (1994).

by Claudia Ferradas Moi

It was one of those splendid sunny mornings in Buenos Aires. My class of higher-intermediate students of English as a foreign language had just finished analysing a short story and were now supposed to answer the one-million-dollar question in the textbook: "What story have you read recently? Summarize the plot and identify the theme."

"Well, have you been reading anything interesting lately?" I asked, if only to make the question sound less imposing.

"Yes," a twenty-year-old boy said. "It's the story of a man who leaves his home and family behind to help build England's railways. It's a hard, dangerous job. He sees many of his friends die in landslides. He suffers. He remembers his wife and children, but he cannot go back because they need the money. It's a story about work and exploitation, about the high price of progress..."

"How interesting!" I said, a proud literature teacher who has just heard one of her students summarize plot and identify theme successfully. "Was the story written by a nineteenth century writer?"

"No," my student frowned, "it's a song by Genesis. Haven't you heard 'Driving the Last Spike'?"

I think I can remember a slight note of reproach in my student's voice; at least, his question sounded to me as if I had asked, "Haven't you read HAMLET?" His words were a reminder of what I have come to consider self-evident: *the words of rock songs make up a highly representative corpus within the literature of the second half of the 20th century, particularly of literature written in English.* Yet, they do not form a proportionally significant part within the selection of material made by contemporary literature teachers.

Although we foreign language teachers very often make use of song lyrics in our language classes (especially for the development of listening comprehension skills) we do not normally select them for textual analysis and even more seldom do we "read them as literature." However, many teachers are worried about how to get their teenage students interested in textual analysis and about how to teach English literature to students who have to face technical difficulties in texts whose relevance to their lives they do not always see—and all this in a foreign language! Paradoxically, a parallel literary system develops side-by-side with "school literature" and its restrictions and prejudices as to what can or should be read. My simple proposal is to start with that "alternative system," with that which students feel naturally inclined to: texts of non-conventional circulation—comics, graffiti, all kinds of magazines. Within that corpus, a good selection of rock lyrics will prove to be an excellent opportunity for literary analysis. Such analysis will provide students with the necessary tools to face more unfamiliar texts and will surely get them interested in other forms of literature whose relevance and richness they will then be better equipped to appreciate.

In short, rock lyrics are:

- Highly motivating
- Relevant to students' lives
- A potential bridge leading to more serious (i.e. "consecrated") literature
- A source of easy-to-get authentic reading and listening material (particularly in an EFL situation)

If my student took it for granted that the events in a narrative poem he had heard in the form of a rock song made up the plot of a text he had read, what is the relationship between literature and rock? We can look at this question in at least two ways:

a) Literature in rock, and

b) Rock as literature.

Literature in Rock

By this we mean poems set to music or lyrics which are hypertexts of previous literary works. "Hypertext" is used here as is done by Gerard Genette in his book *Palimpsestes* (1962), where he studies the relationships between one text and another, whether explicit or secret. He calls this TRANSTEXTUALITY. Within transtextual relationships, Genette defines hypertextuality as "the relationship that links text B (the HYPERTEXT) to a previous text A (the HYPOTEXT) in a way which is not a mere commentary. B transforms A without necessarily quoting from A or making explicit allusions to it." Examples of hypertexts are:

- KATE BUSH, "Wuthering Heights," after the homonymous novel by Emily Brontë
- RICK WAKEMAN, "1984," after the novel by George Orwell
- IRON MAIDEN, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," based on the poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- ALAN PARSON'S PROJECT, "Extraordinary Narrations," hypertexts of stories by Edgar Allan Poe

No matter how "soft" or how "hard," these works enrichen the discussion of the hypotexts and easily bring up the question of the texts' relevance to students' lives. The examples mentioned allow us to see the two basic thematic lines of rock lyrics:

a) Protest and denunciation: against the official order, authority, the consumer society. Its main motifs are: freedom, "escape" into a utopian world of peace and love, community life in far-away places in contact with nature, a return to the natural and spontaneous, ecological concerns.

b) The oneiric, mystical and hallucinogenic (connected with drug culture, surrealism, oriental religions, mythology, psychedelism).

Both lines appear blended from the very beginning. Yet, although the works concerned with social and political denunciation remain simple, repetitive and explicit, aimed at a larger public though always opposed in principle to "commercial music" or "pop", the second line becomes gradually more complex, highly symbolic and obscure.

Rock as Literature

Even when not related to literary works, rock lyrics themselves can be considered poems. Traditionally, the lyrics of popular songs in our century were meant to communicate a verbal message which was easy to understand and in whose decodification music was not an obstacle. They respected what Eduardo Romano in "Palabra y canción" (1990) calls the "intelligibility threshold." In this respect, these songs contrasted sharply with nursery rhymes, ritual songs and folklore in general, where the phonological associations triggered off by the lexical elements had always been more important than the expression of what words mean in every-day language.

It was rock'n'roll that, in the 1950's, would radically change this state of affairs by going back to primitive singing. Think of Bill Halley's "Rock Around the Clock": short onomatopoeic words form a mechanical enumeration; the singer's voice is but another instrument. People all over the world can recognize the words, identify with them and hum or even sing them, no matter how elementary their knowledge of English, because words are just one more instrument contributing to the whole, regardless of their dictionary meaning. Words have liberated themselves from the duty of meaning something precise and concrete—which has always been the case in poetry.

The Beatles knew this, and humming, mumbling and shouting form as important a part of their lyrics as do the still clearly intelligible words. John Lennon points out in an interview that all his songs are born out of playing with words freely, so that words sometimes make sense and sometimes don't. In the first press report that appeared on the group, Bob Wooler, the disk jockey at the Liverpool Tavern Club, writes: "I think the Beatles are No. 1 because they resurrected original style rock'n'roll music, the origins of which are to be found in American negro singers....Here again, in the Beatles, was *the stuff that screams are made of*. Here was the excitement—both physical and aural—that symbolised the rebellion of

youth..." (quoted in Wicke, 1990, the emphasis is my own).

This tendency will become stronger and stronger. Today, as we all know, it is hardly possible to transcribe the lyrics of the songs our students bring to class. This fact is so widely accepted, even among native speakers of the language in question, that compact disks are accompanied by a printed transcription of the song lyrics. Romano refers to this phenomenon as the "retribalization of the word," a return to its ritual power: it's the listener who builds up his own "internal lyrics" by means of the babbling, the humming and the words he hears and their combination with music. And among them there's shouting, the primeval scream, which, as in tribal rites, channels aggressiveness, brings singers and listeners together and allows them to identify as members of a community. What's more, this use of the word as sound awakening a plurality of meanings in the active mind of the reader, this return to the primitive and the oneiric, inscribes rock lyrics within a literary tradition which goes back to Romanticism and goes through Symbolism and nonsense poetry into the avant-garde forms of literary modernism.

Ms. Moi conducting a workshop on a Genesis video.

Modern literary theory lays emphasis, precisely, upon the active role of the reader rather than on the author's creative genius or on the text as a self-sufficient entity. Umberto Eco (1979), for example, points out that there are works which challenge the reader to play a protagonic role, to build the work; Roland Barthes (1970) states that the interest of a literary work, rather than to make readers *consumers* of the text, is to make them *producers* of it. This seems to be the case with rock readers and listeners. What is more, the primeval scream finds its 20th century correlative in the rock recital or live concert, where the participant joins the musicians and singers in a trance-like communion where the body plays an essential part and without which the work is definitely incomplete.

Up to what extent does the solitary listener in his living-room or cut off under his walkman headphones share in this mode of reception? Perhaps the ever-growing tendency to make rock records during live performaces rather than in recording studios is an attempt to reconstruct the ritual which results from the give-and-take that takes place between artists and public.

As readers and listeners of rock, we form part of what Stanley Fish (1980) calls an "interpretive community" capable of applying shared interpretive procedures, but we are, at the same time, free to carry out our own, unique appropriation of the text and its music. Interpreting rock lyrics in class can then prove to be a magnificent opportunity to exchange views, to see how much the members of the community of the classroom have in common and also to learn to see the world from somebody else's perspective. In our role of teachers, we should never forget that no reading can be considered the definite, final, reading and that, as a result, no teacher can provide anything like "the right interpretation." This is something that, Jonathan Culler (1982) warns us, beginning literature students know quite well, but they may have forgotten by the time they graduate or become literature teachers. Reading means accepting the hypothesis that a work can always grow—as long as the role of reader can be played.

Just as in a rock'n'roll concert, students and teachers recreate and dramatize the ritual of reciprocal feedback which defines any artistic experience. With the precious help of our imagination, we remind one another that teaching and learning are the twin aspects of an equally creative process. So, paraphrasing my student, have you *read* "Driving the Last Spike"?

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GALA NIGHT:

Experiencing English Beyond the Classroom

Gilberto Diaz Santos is an instructor of English as a Foreign Language at the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of Havana in Cuba. Currently, he is teaching academic reading and writing to undergraduates. His other interests include language acquisition, non-traditional teaching, ESP curriculum design, and electronic communications.

by Gilberto Diaz Santos

Everything started ten years ago while I was watching a Sunday night TV contest. As in "Jeopardy" and many similar shows around the world, people were having quite an enjoyable time answering questions, deciphering cryptic messages, and showing their abilities and speed at finding words in a dictionary. "Why not do this with my students at the Institute?" I suddenly thought.

A month later, with a little help from some friends, fellow teachers, and students, we organized the first of a series of shows to be known as "Gala Night." This was an attempt to take English out of the classrooms—the activity was held in the school garden in an almost magical atmosphere. The show consisted of a presentation of some funny dramatizations, poems, and a Master of Ceremonies asking the audience some questions about the history, geography and literature of the English-speaking peoples as well as about some curiosities of the English language. The most important rule established from the outset was: Not a single word is to be spoken in Spanish.

Playing by the Rules

That night's success and the many suggestions that came from the participants made us realize that we could do things more seriously and give a methodological approach to the activity without affecting the joy and amusement that characterized it. Staff teachers began to determine which of the daily classroom activities would be suitable for the next program. For this, it was necessary to follow two important principles. First, each and every activity of the program should challenge the participants and provide an opportunity for them to put into practice the knowledge and skills they have acquired in English. Second, through the different activities and presentations, students from lower levels were to get an initial input, a sort of anticipation of knowledge that they were to deal with in advanced stages, thus providing motivation and developing their intellectual curiosity.

According to these principles, it is important that the organizers of the program take into consideration the inclusion of games and competitions suitable for different levels in such a way that every student feels that there is a chance for him/her to participate. The competitive activities that have proved to be more successful are the following:

1. Looking up in dictionaries polysemic words to determine their meaning in a given context. The abilities to be tested are scanning, reading speed and accuracy in meaning.
2. Quickly determining synonyms, antonyms and other semantic relationships.
3. Translating from English into Spanish and vice-versa some idiomatic expressions, proverbs, sayings, and false cognates.
4. Determining the lack of concordance—be it logical or grammatical—in certain facts or sentences. For example: a rolling stone gathers no leaves ["moss" is correct].
5. Reading aloud tongue-twisters.
6. Answering questions about the life and culture, history, geography, literature of the English-speaking peoples.
7. Answering questions about curiosities of the English language. For example the meaning of certain acronyms, such as TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages). There are other possibilities for particular sections or contests related to the world of entertainment:
8. Singing parts of a pop song after having heard the recording of some introductory musical phrases. This is very funny and may help to discover talented singers.

9. Identifying names of songs, musicians and record albums. This is important since our radio disc jockeys often mispronounce some of these names and contribute to setting incorrect pronunciation models.
10. Giving the original titles of films which have been shown under different titles in Spanish.
11. Identifying the original music score from films.

More Than a One-Night Stand

Even though the Gala Night in itself is regarded as a single event, it is only part of a whole process in which learners are exposed to the foreign language beyond the classroom. The period of time from the official announcement of the show until the very night chosen can be exploited in many ways as an invaluable intensive language practice. For example, a bulletin board or a great variety of posters help to inform about the date and place of the competition. Pictures and cartoons present things in a more lively fashion and may provide ingenious suggestions to introduce new vocabulary items. The teachers and students engaged in preparing this advertising campaign will have a chance to develop creativity and to make more complicated use of language structures. For example, the announcements can be treated like required reading material to practice any of the information-getting strategies.

If teachers like for students to have a greater input before the Gala, special broadcasts on the school radio can be organized, and small groups can be given the chance to put into action their oral skills by performing as DJ's or news anchors. This provides new material to practice listening comprehension. If teachers are interested in a particular linguistic structure, they can design specific advertisements to suit their purposes.

The more motivation you can create before the Gala; the more everyone will feel a potential participant. Once the students know what's on the menu for the coming Night, they register voluntarily for the competitions. Others are selected to represent their class, and the remaining ones also think that they may succeed in answering one of the questions directed to the whole audience. You will see that the Gala is the topic of conversation in the halls; everyone feels he is to do something and commits himself to study and to prepare in different ways. Some go to the library to read or just to find a possible clue. Others study the new vocabulary or rehearse a group presentation such as a play, poem, or chorus. They exchange questions during breaks and leisure hours, or even devote more time to listening to music or radio broadcasts in English. This whole process is really feverish: the contagion takes place as additional exposure to the foreign language where, most of the time, learners play an active role in a natural environment.

In a Nutshell

We can say that more than a one-night affair, the Gala Night is a competitive and cultural show, the central axis and culminating event of a process in which learners are exposed through different ways and challenged to interact with peers, professors or other people either receptively or productively. This practice not only provides feedback on what has been taught and practiced in the classrooms, but is also an efficient way to anticipate content and motivate new quests for information. Therefore, more than an unforgettable moment of joy and entertainment, the Gala is a special teaching situation where learning happens through a very effective and affective filter.

For various reasons, I spent several years away from the Pedagogical Institute, where I conceived the Gala Night event. I have since came back to university life and now teach ESP to mathematics undergraduates. At first, I was hesitant to try my old technique because I did not think that it would work with this different student population. Nevertheless, I made the attempt, and I was more than surprised to see students perform in English better than ever before. Now, the Gala Night has come to be a traditional celebration of the Faculty of Mathematics and Cybernetics of the University of Havana. The remaining faculties are on their way to contagion.

Appendix A.

In this appendix we provide brief descriptions of the several competitions included in the Gala Night program. Information is also given concerning the linguistics skills at which they are aimed, as well as a consideration of the level they suit. This is certainly no straight jacket: other activities can be incorporated, and other levels could also be involved.

1. Be as Fast as Lightning

Linguistic Skills: Listening comprehension Speaking
Establishing semantic field relationships

Level: Beginners

Description: A professor or anybody else selected as the Master of Ceremonies will provide clues to the competitors. It is a fast-thinker activity.

Example 1:

M.C.: " ... cold ..."
Student: " As cold as ice "
M.C.: " ... heavy ..."
Student: " As heavy as an elephant "

Example 2:

M.C.: " Taxi is to driver as helicopter is to...."
Student: " Pilot "
M.C.: " UFO is to unidentified flying object as ASCI is to..."
Student: " American Standard Code for Information Interchange..."
M.C.: " Beefsteak is to frying pan as coffee is to..."
Student: " Kettle "

2. Look Up the Meaning

Linguistic skills: Reading speed (scan-skim) Word choice
Reading comprehension Speaking

Level: Beginners (using a bilingual dictionary)
Intermediate and advanced (monolingual dictionary)

Description: Each participant should have a dictionary. It should be closed before every sentence to be presented. The Master of Ceremonies will show different posters, each containing a sentence with a highlighted word. This word may have different meanings, but only one possibility should be accepted in that context. The contestants should look up the word and provide the correct meaning. If a bilingual dictionary is used, the appropriate Spanish equivalent or an English synonym should be provided. In the case of the English-only dictionary, you could ask for the meaning or a synonym of the highlighted word.

Example 1: (English-Spanish)

Poster: Ed crossed the river in a BARGE.
Student: (finds BARCA, BOTE, EMBARCACION) "bote" (or he may also provide the English word "boat")

Example 2: (English-English)

Poster: The student received a WIRE from his school.
Student: (looks up) "The student received a telegram from his school ".

3. Questions For Everybody

Linguistic skills: Listening comprehension Speaking
Background knowledge

Level: All. The questions are directed to the audience and may be answered by anyone. But priority should be given to students. The Master of Ceremony or the Jury determines if the answer is right.

Description: Questions may be on all topics: geography, literature, history, curiosities of the English language, riddles, and the like.

4. Who Translates Faster and Better?

(Proverbs, sayings, idiomatic expressions, false cognates, titles of films)

Linguistic skills: Listening comprehension — Reading comprehension
Translation — Speaking

Level: Intermediate and advanced.

Description: The presentation of the item to be translated can be done orally or in posters.

Example 1:

M.C.: How do you say in Spanish "He who laughs last, laughs best" ?

Student: "El que rie ultimo rie mejor."

M.C.: How do you say in English "papel de China"?

Student: "India paper."

M.C.: (poster) Mind one's P's and Q's.

Student: "Andarse con pie de plomo."

Example 2: (films)

English title	Spanish title
Jaws	*Tiburon Sangriento*
Comma	*Sala 8*
Working Girl	*Secretaria Ejecutiva*
The Blues Brothers	*Los Hermanos Caradura*

5. Films, Actors, Actresses and Directors

Linguistic skills: Listening comprehension — Speaking
Background knowledge

Level: All

Description: This is a question-answer activity that may be organized in several ways:

- You can give the names of three films linked to a single actor actress or director and ask the contestants to guess his/her name.
- You can ask for an outstanding Academy Award.
- You can ask for the original title in English by giving the Spanish translation.
- You can play a recording of the soundtrack and have the contestant guess the name of the films, singers, and stars.
- You can describe a scene from the film and ask the title.

If your school has the necessary equipment, you can play on a VCR-TV or videobeam-TV a part of a film and use it as a pattern for an acting contest.

6. Music

Linguistic skills: Listening comprehension — Speaking
Background knowledge

Level: All

Description: For all possible contests related to music, it will be necessary to record fragments of songs. You can ask for information such as:

- Name of the song, singer, players, album. (You can either present a recorded fragment or a poster with some lines of the lyrics.)
- Ask if the song is related to an Academy Award.
- Historical data about the song (For example "We Are the World")
- Instead of playing part of the recorded song, play a solo part in which the melody is heard.
- Name of the solo artist and in which group he used to play. For example:
  Lionel Richie–"Commodores" — Peter Cetera–"Chicago"
  Michael MacDonald–"Doobie Brothers"
- You can also use fragments of the song and have the contestants sing a part after stopping the recording.

7. Tongue-Twisters

Linguistic skills: Reading (Silent and oral) Speaking

Levels: All. But the degree of difficulty of the tongue-twister should be taken into consideration as to the level of the students. In the same program you can have one or two tongue-twister competitions: one for Beginners-Intermediate and another for Advanced.

Santos (right) fires questions during the main event of GALA NIGHT.

Description: Hand the contestants a slip of paper on which the tongue-twister is written. Let the contestants read and do a little rehearsal. Then let each read or say the tongue-twister; only one shot. The jury should decide who is the winner.

8. Gala Night

This is the backbone or main event of the show and takes place between two teams of 4 to 10 people. We suggest starting the competition at the very beginning of the Gala and scheduling other contests as long as this one lasts.The name of the competition may vary depending on the chart you would like to use (either letters or numbers).

Linguistic skills: Listening comprehension Logical thinking Speaking
Reading comprehension Background knowledge

Level: All. Each team should be made up of students from different levels.

Description: Let us use the example of the Gala Night chart or poster. Each of the letters—G, A, L, A, N, I, G, H, T—represent a question on a topic. The letters can be written on different pages of paper. On the back of each page, there are many questions written. The Master of Ceremonies chooses one. Several sets of these pages are prepared. In each turn the team selects a letter.

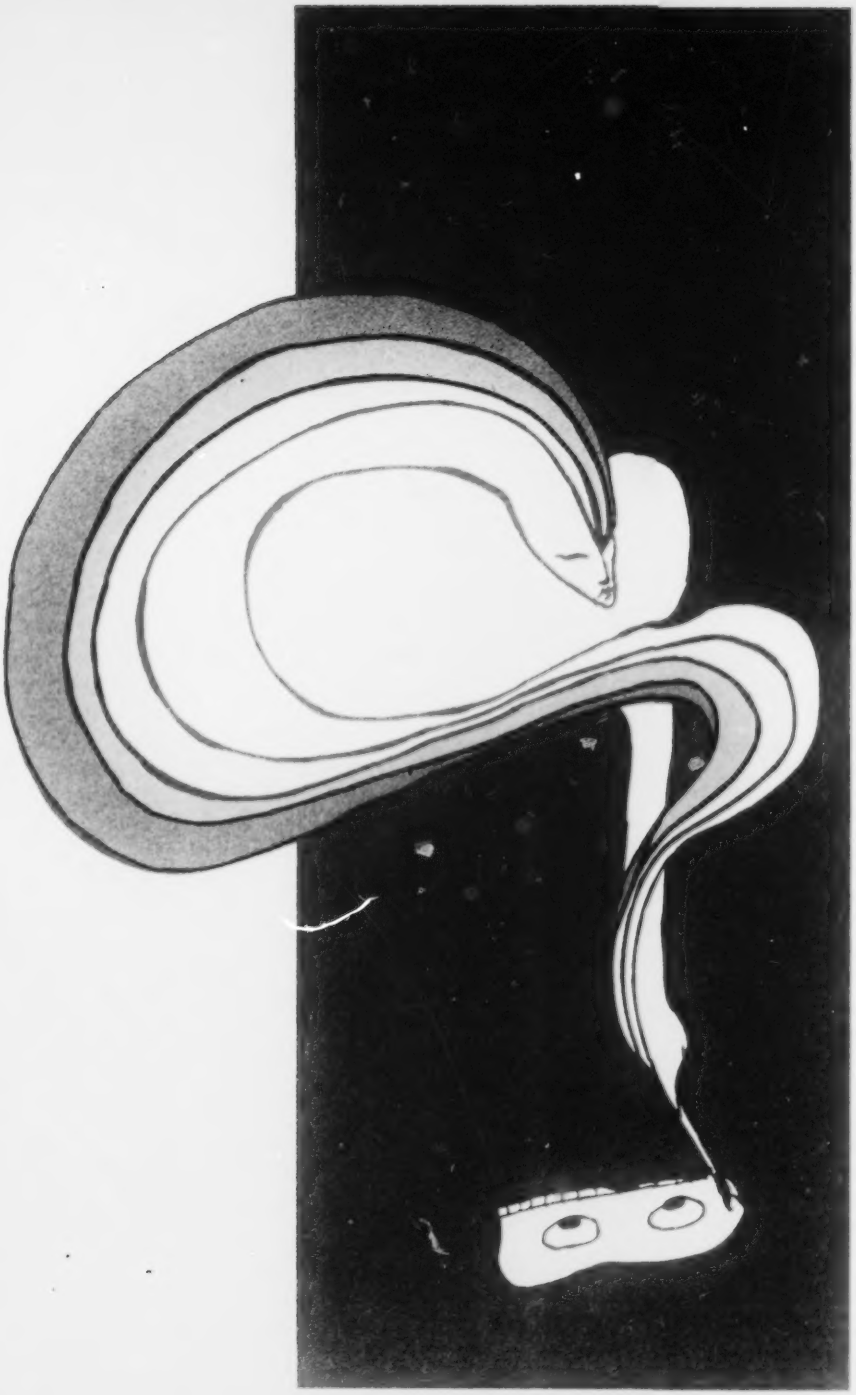
G could be GEOGRAPHY
A could be ABSURDITIES
L could be LITERATURE
A could be CINEMA
N could be INTERESTING THINGS
I could be THINK DEEPLY
G could be GRAMMAR
H could be HISTORY
T could be TRANSLATION

Unanswered questions may either be transferred to the other team or to the audience.

Appendix B

Here is just a sample of the questions we have used in the Gala Night main contest as well as in the Questions for Everybody competition.

1. Which cities are known as the "Twin Cities" in the US? In which state are they located ?
2. What's wrong with the following statement?:
   "I hope to attend last week's rock concert."
3. Identify the author of the poem whose fragment follows:
   Here Captain! Dear Captain
   This arm beneath your head,
   It's some dream that on the deck
   You've fallen cold and dead.
4. The themes from "The Beauty and The Beast" and "Aladdin" received the Academy Awards for "Best Original Music Score" of a film in 1992 and 1993 respectively. The two songs are performed by duos, but there is a singer who features in both. Who is this singer ?
5. Whenever there is a ship in danger, a three-letter signal is transmitted in order to request help. What signal is that and what do the letters mean ?
6. How do you say in Spanish "He hit three home runs in a row?"



Daydreams and Nightmares:
The Need for the Imagination in Student Writing

Dr. Steve Haber, Coordinator of ESL at Jersey City State College, received the Mary Finocchiario Award at TESOL Vancouver (1992) for a book he co-authored, In Our Own Words (St. Martin's Press). A graduate of Columbia University, Dr. Haber, whose interests include Computer Assisted Language Learning, is designing a state-of-the-art lab at his College.

by Steven Haber

A few years ago, I was teaching an ESL College Writing class and came across the following essay written by one of my students from Vietnam. Although it has been edited slightly, the content is essentially the student's.

My Grandfather
by Tam Nguyen

I cried a lot when my grandfather was gone forever. No one could replace his position in my heart. I was too young to understand what death is and why men have to die. I thought that my grandfather just slept and I hoped that he would awaken to play with me, and take me to his small garden.

Besides my parents, my grandfather was the one who loved me the most. He was more than my grandpa; he really was my best friend. My uncles and aunts loved me too, but they just loved me as a lovely kid.

My extended family lived in a big house in the suburbs. Everybody in my family went to work so I was at home with my grandfather and a housemaid. In the place we lived, there were only a few children, so my grandfather was the only one who played with me.

We had a big garden which was planted with fruit trees such as cherries, mangoes, guavas, bananas..., but I preferred my grandfather's garden. It was a piece of land beside my house. My grandfather planted a lot of flowers such as roses, chrysanthemums, lilies, and several kinds of orchids. My father called him an amateur botanist. He also planted cactus, ornamental plants, and bonsai trees. My grandfather shaped plants into animal shapes and other nice shapes. There were two dragons, four herons, and some deer in the garden.

Everyday, my grandfather and I watered and took care of the garden. He taught me how to garden and trim the plants. When I did wrong, he never got angry. He just smiled and encouraged me. He knew I was too young to do well in everything he showed.

On nice days, my grandfather took me out to go fishing at the lake near our house. I liked these days very much, because I had a chance to go out, see nature, run about everywhere. I sat beside my grandfather to see him fish under the shadow of the trees. You know, I always cried out when he caught a fish. Sometimes he let me try. I was very happy when I pulled up a fish by myself.

I liked to sleep with my grandfather because he usually told me fairy tales. The prince, princess, king, and angel in his stories always appeared in my nice dreams. I usually fell asleep before he finished the story, and he would continue it the next night.

When my grandfather passed away, I felt something break in my heart. Everything in his room and his garden reminded me of him.

As so often happens when I ask my students to write about an influential person in their lives, I was very much moved by this little essay. It was so rich in detail; the garden with its tropical fruits and exotic flowers, the bonsai trees and topiary. I could picture the little boy and his grandfather wandering together through the garden, protected from the brutal war that was raging in the countryside, safe within the suburbs of Saigon which never felt much of the death and bloodshed until the very last days of the war.

And then there was the poignancy of the end. The grandfather had died. The garden was no more.

The peace and gentility of Saigon had finally been violated as the new government marched in with its flags and slogans, ready to take revenge for the 25 year of senseless war against the only available enemies left: the intellectuals, the merchant class, the ethnic Chinese and anyone else who had ever been associated with the government of the South.

Although he never spoke much about his past, I am sure that Tam's family had been among these persecuted groups, as had been so many of the Vietnamese students I have taught. What else could have driven them to flee at night in tiny boats across treacherous waters only to languish in refugee camps for years waiting for visas to enter the United States.

So it was not just Tam's story about his grandfather that had moved me, but its historical and personal context. This little reminiscence without any references to the war and its ensuing suffering spoke volumes about the tragedy that was Vietnam, and the suffering of its people.

But the story isn't over yet. A year after Tam had left my class (and gone on to become a National Honor student), his sister Tuan began to study with me, although I did not know they were related at the time. When we came to the assignment to write about an influential person, I brought out Tam's essay and read it to the class as I often do with good student writing. I have found that students love to read, and are inspired by, the work of their peers.

As I read Tam's essay aloud, I struggled to choke back tears as I could not help but resurrect the feelings of sadness not only for Tam personally at the loss of his grandfather, but also for the multiplication of this tragedy so many millions of times over from the war and its aftermath. As I read, the whole class was rapt in the way that people become when they are witnessing drama together. Again, it was not the essay alone that had moved them, but our collective reaction to it.

After I finished reading, we sat silently for a moment regaining composure. It was then that Tuan raised her hand.

"You know," she said, "Tam is my brother."

Thoughts and questions started racing through my mind. Would she be able to tell us more? Reveal some crucial detail that Tam had not included in his essay that would change everything? I began to question her gently in front of the class.

"So you are Tam's sister. Then you must have known your grandfather too."

"No," she smiled, "I never met him, and Tam didn't either. You see, our grandfather died before Tam was born."

As much as we had all been brought to the brink of tears by Tam's essay, we, the students and myself, were now on the brink of apoplexy.

"And the garden, was there one?"

"No," she said, "We lived in a flat. Tam is always making up those stories."

At first I could not believe it, but something about the way she said it made me believe her. It did not seem like something she would lie about, especially in front of the class.

A few days later, I ran into Tam on the campus and asked him if what his sister had told me was true. He grinned and turned bright red, nodding. But why had he done it? He simply grinned, but did not answer.

My first reaction was a feeling of betrayal. Here was one of my best students passing off as factual an essay which could only be described as fiction; very good fiction, but fiction nonetheless. I felt as if I had been cheated, manipulated into feeling sympathy for the loss of a relationship that had never even existed. But then again, this was not the first time that I had to explain to a student the difference between fact and fiction. And the essay, no matter what its origin, remains undiminished as a fine piece of writing. I decided to forgive Tam, although I warned him not to do this again.

As the years passed, I have continued to use this essay in my classes but now after each reading, I ask my students if they think this is a true story. They shake their heads in puzzlement and sometimes howl in disbelief when I tell them that this is indeed a work of fiction. Then I ask them if it changes the story for them, knowing it is not true.

Some have said it ruined the story for them, feeling as I did initially, that the trust between reader

and writer had been violated. But there were others who said, "What difference does it make? What matters is the story itself. If the author is clever enough to make everyone believe it really happened, isn't that a sign of talent and good writing?"

Year after year, the debate goes on, each time occasioning further reflection on the nature of fact and fantasy in student writing. The question I keep asking myself is the same one I asked Tam that day on the campus, the one he did not answer—why write an essay about a relationship that never existed?

Fantasy in Human Experience

Perhaps it has to do with the role of fantasy in human experience. Fantasy, like language itself, is not simply something human beings use to amuse themselves. It is a human need. People don't just fantasize to escape boredom or to provide material for writing assignments, they do it to fill empty places in their lives. I am reminded of Puig's *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in which the protagonist, Molina, creates for himself a rich and elaborate fantasy life based on the stories of 1940's Hollywood movies because this is the only way he can survive in a world that is brutal beyond endurance. The fantasy for him becomes a refuge, a place to preserve whatever it is about him that is human.

I am not saying that Tam wrote about his grandfather as a refuge against atrocity, although I am sure he has seen his share of it. Yet I can not help but feel that this fictitious grandfather and his wonderful imaginary garden helped to fulfill in Tam a real need, perhaps for the tranquility that had been stolen from him, first by war, then by the communists, and finally by the flight from his home to a land where the struggle to survive robbed him of peace once more. For Tam, the absence of a real grandfather, a real garden, were mere details. He needed them in his life, so he created them, much the way someone might bang in a nail with the heel of a shoe if no hammer is readily available. The imagination permits us to fill in the details that God or nature or luck carelessly left out.

Take the example of another student, Vladimir Kuchinsky from the former Soviet Union. Driven by political problems and a desire to discover what he would become in the West, at age 50, he left a prestigious job as a metallurgical engineer and emigrated to the United States. He quickly found a job as an office cleaner and shortly after that began studying English. When I met him, he was in his first year of College in an intermediate level ESL Writing class.

At least once a semester, I assign a "free topic." That is, the students are free to write about any topic they choose. Usually there is a brain-storming session and some discussion to narrow the topics or to select those which would be of greatest interest to readers, but essentially, the students are left on their own. The following essay, also slightly edited, was Vlamidir's.

The Pink Fatamorgana*

by Vladimir Kuchinsky

"Do not listen to the alarm clock if you see a good dream."

Faraway from this sinful planet, somewhere in space, is another planet—"The Pink Fatamorgana." I have been up there almost every night. Every night something new has happened in the Pink Fatamorgana. There is not such a thing like night or afternoon. Everything is up to you. If you want to see night—you see night. If you want to see day—you see day.

There is not such a thing like money or army, real estate or policemen. There is not such a thing as shame, debauchery and corruption. There is no enemy or terrorist. There is no fascism or communism. There is no other color—except pink.

It was early in the morning. I was walking down the pink field, and watching pink clouds in the pink heaven. Something unusual happened this morning. The pink clouds were flying for a while, and later they formed a beautiful pink lady who was playing on a piano a Chopin sonata. From the first sight, I fell in love.

The lady gracefully stepped down from the pink heaven to the pink field. She was walking

*Fatamorgana: (Latin)—mirage.

toward me. My head was turned, and my heart went down to my feet.

"My darling," she said, "I have been waiting for you in the Pink Fatamorgana almost 2,000 years. Where have you been all this time?"

I felt that my heart stopped beating and my blood was going out from my body.

At this time, the alarm clock woke me up. It was 5:30 in the morning. I found myself in the gray room with icy cold water in the bathroom. I had to hurry up to be on time. I was walking down the gray street, in the most gray neighborhood, in the gray Brooklyn, to the gray subway station. The gray people surrounded me in the gray train. When I closed my gray eyes in the gray car, I saw my Pink Fatamorgana, and my dream repeated again.

Somewhere in space there is another planet, the planet called "The Pink Fatamorgana." I hope in the future I'll fly there. My pink goddess will meet me up there. We will be together forever. Nobody could separate us from each other. It will be there in the beautiful pink morning.

In this essay, moreso than in Tam's, the references to the disappointments of "real life" are more direct: "There is not such a thing like money or army, real estate or policemen. There is not such a thing as shame, debauchery and corruption. There is no enemy or terrorist. There is no fascism or communism." Clearly all of these had tortured Vladimir in his life in one form or another, as did the "grayness" of his present circumstances. Yet, he is able to create for himself a refuge, a pink fatamorgana, which, like Tam's garden, becomes a kind of haven from a world that so often fails to measure up to even the humblest expectations.

Aside from the possible therapeutic value such fantasies might have upon student writers, what other implications might there be for language learning in general? What immediately comes to mind is the work of Earl Stevick who postulated that the deeper the learner's emotional involvement in a communicative act, the greater the chances that the language used in that act would become acquired in long term memory.

As Tam or Vladimir were weaving together the images for their fantasy worlds, they needed to reach deep within the language within them and the language they did not yet know. For example, it is unlikely that words such as "chrysanthemums," "lilies," "orchids," "herons" or "bonsai trees" were part of Tam's everyday vocabulary. These are words he probably had to look up. Yet in the essay, these words become part of the imagistic landscape. Not only does the writer have a real communicative context for these words as he struggles to make the reader "see" what exists only in the writer's mind, the new words become deeply embedded in the associative matrix of thought, memory, and desire that motivated the writing in the first place. The result is that these words become acquired in long term memory, if not to be used again immediately, at least recognizable when they are encouhtered in other contexts.

In exploring the imagination, students fulfill a human need to bring into existence that which the real world has neglected to provide. At the same time, the struggle to bring images to the surface—images from this imaginary world—becomes an occasion for acquiring language in a deep and lasting way. By encouraging this kind of exploration, teachers can help students discover the worlds within themselves and the language needed to bring those worlds to others.

The Role of Art in Language Learning

by Catriona R. Moore, Judith A. Koller, Maria Kreie Arago

Catriona Moore (above), Judith Koller, and Maria Kreie Arago recently finished the postbaccalaureate program in second languages and cultures education at the University of Minnesota. Catriona Moore teaches ESL at Hayden Heights Elementary School in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where she and her students continue to explore the role of art in ESL. Judy Koller teaches in the Grand Rapids, Minnesota area. Maria Kreie Arago teaches Spanish FLES in Minnetonka Public Schools.

As teachers of ESL, French, and Spanish, we have become increasingly interested in the role that student-created images play in language learning. We have witnessed first-hand the excitement that art creation brings to our students. We have seen how such activities decrease inhibitions and improve the classroom atmosphere. We have learned through artwork about the individual personalities and experiences of our students. We have even watched art develop into language. Therefore, in a time in which learning and teaching theory is urging the integration of academic disciplines, we are especially drawn to the integration of language and art.

In this paper, we lay a theoretical foundation for the integration of artistically-inspired activities into the second language classroom, and then we demonstrate how art and language learning may be combined within a broader unit of study. Most of these activities are not art for art's sake, but rather art activities: we are not teaching *about* art, but rather *with* it and *through* it for the sake of second language learning. This taps into the affective domain, which we are seeking to activate. The activities are student-centered and student-initiated, and they involve a great deal of imagination and creativity. We will refer to them as student-created artwork, student-created visuals, or student-created images.

Why Use Student-Created Artwork?

Many education professionals (Bassano and Christison, 1982; Franklin, 1989; Richardson, 1990; Shier, 1990) advocate the need to fuse affective and cognitive domains of knowledge. The affective domain includes emotions, attitudes, feelings, and other intuitive ways of knowing; while the cognitive domain refers to intellectual, rational ways of thinking. Shier contends that in everyone's daily interactions there are always both affective and cognitive variables at work, and thus effective classroom instruction should automatically address both.

Christison (1993) believes that student-created images enhance language learning in three different ways. First, students are more involved, confident, and productive. Next, there is a positive change in the classroom environment that is uninhibiting and conducive to language learning. Finally, students are more able to perform cognitively demanding tasks, and the quality of their written and spoken language improves. Motivation also increases when they share artwork with classmates (Wright, 1989).

Shier maintains that art more actively engages students in their own learning processes on a personal, intellectual, and physical level. Bassano and Christison attribute this engagement to an emotional quality in art. Recognizing the ability of the arts and art activities to engage and motivate students, Allen (1990) believes the process of acquiring language comes naturally when students are involved in activities in which they can find meaning and purpose.

The improvement of the classroom dynamic suggests that when students have the opportunity to develop their skills in a number of areas, they feel more confident; and when they have the opportunity to share their creations with others and see that everyone's work has its own story, they tend to hold more respect for each other (Shier). Bassano and Christison comment that when students cooperate with each other to create visual images and tell their stories, the class develops a sense of group unity, and individual and cultural differences are accepted. Classrooms that observe, value, and respect differences are better learning environments, suggests Franklin (1989).

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Andrade (1990) writes that the arts and artwork can provide a context for conversation and an impetus for communication. Such conversation or student oral production is vital in the second language classroom. Art activities provided Bassano and Christison's students with cues for conversation as well as topics for narrative writings and journal work; the authors point out that input for language learning comes from aural, oral, and visual sources.

Student-created images can introduce new subject matter because they are more real, vivid, and meaningful to the students' lives (Richardson 1990). Similarly, Mann (1988) emphasizes that students' drawings provide a guide for verbal expression: she requires of her students that their writing not contradict their drawing; thus the writing is contextualized and personal.

Second language education goes beyond language itself to the study of culture and society, and here also the integration of art experiences has an important role to play. Shier suggests that art helps students to link the language they are learning to its culture. She observed her students developing awareness of the culture in which the target language is spoken through their participation in art experiences. This gave them a broader perspective for interpreting cultural materials they heard or read outside the classroom. Steiner (1986) advocates cultivating children's appreciation for the beauty of language by integrating art experiences with language learning in order to help them develop a sense of international and intercultural acceptance.

Through student-created images, the teacher can learn a great deal about the students' personalities, experiences, and interests (Franklin, 1989). Franklin explains that the teacher can study the content and style of the students' artwork in the same way that one would study a master work of art, which can lead to a teacher's greater respect and value for the students. It can also help the teacher learn about the students' literary and aesthetic preferences. Bassano and Christison describe how the teacher can become more aware of and sensitive to the attitudes, needs, interests and personalities of each student. This makes it easier to individualize instruction and to plan lessons and units.

Student-created artwork also helps the students to discover more about themselves. Bassano and Christison contend that such self-discovery can help increase the students' self-esteem as they uncover their unique learning styles and resources and apply them to language learning. This happens in part because through drawings and other artwork, barriers are lowered, and the students feel a freedom from anxiety which makes them more apt to learn.

Integrating Artwork with Language

Theorists of art education have outlined four steps to integrating art content into the curriculum. Shier suggests that the first three—history, criticism, and aesthetics—provide subject study and discussion; while production, the fourth step, is a medium of instruction. Teachers must make a creative and deliberate effort to incorporate student-created art activities so that they are truly integrated rather than merely diversionary. Integrated visual work contributes to the contextualization of written work (Bergstrom, 1991), and encourages the development of critical thinking skills.

Franklin describes her experience with art integration in her second language classroom, with reference to Patricia Carini's process of "reflective observation" (cited in Franklin, p. 78). The process is specifically designed for ESL, and it provides the students and teachers with a means of getting to know one another. According to Franklin, the process involves three steps: student creation of visual or written work, teacher analysis of student work, and teacher tailoring of instruction to meet the students' needs as revealed by creation and analysis.

In Franklin's study, reflective observation was done with kindergarten ESL students whose native language was Spanish. The process involved looking at the conceptual similarities between student artwork and student language, presumably based on the premise that art and language concepts are deeply related, and develop in parallel, similar ways. Franklin found that observation of several aspects of children's artistic and verbal styles gave her valuable insights into the children's personalities.

The value of this type of diagnostic reflection is supported by research done in the area of children's

aesthetic development. Franklin (p.78) cites King's (1987) contention that for children at this age, "the aesthetic mode is the primary mode of cognition"; children express themselves in a variety of ways including gesture, play, and artworks. Perhaps the underlying theme here is that language and art are forms of representation. When children begin to draw and write, they seek out similarities between a real object and the one they are depicting in their written or visual work (Golomb, 1988).

Grade 1 students (from left to right) Moua Xiong, Xeng Yang, Chang Lee and Sho Vue creating settings for "Over in the Meadow."

Finally, Andrade emphasizes the value of incorporating art and art activities in second language classrooms at the secondary and post-secondary levels, and recognizes the need to justify such activities at those levels. She cites increasing evidence that content-based instruction in secondary and post-secondary language classrooms is highly successful.

Connecting Art and Language

In establishing the link between language and art, one cannot ignore the similar elements that exist within both. Boyer (1985) points out how language and art were two of the first developments of early civilizations. With their nearly identical components, one wonders if the two naturally develop parallel to one another. Shier points out that expression of thoughts and feelings, as well as the spontaneity of the learner, are parts of both language and artwork. She also describes the importance of abstract thoughts, creativity, personal experiences and personal interests to both language and art. Finally, Shier claims that art and art activities provide a unique opportunity for teacher and students to focus in on specific aspects of oral language use, such as intonation and pronunciation, in a way that may not otherwise be possible.

Betty Edwards' two books on drawing instruction, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (1989) and *Drawing on the Artist Within* (1986) are written with the belief that the artist sees and thinks non-verbally in order to create art. Edwards (1989) calls this type of seeing a right-brain activity, one that requires different perceptual skills than those we use with language, which is connected with the left-brain.

In some circumstances, Edwards contends, verbal language can be inappropriate and even hinder creative thinking. Furthermore, she reminds us that "drawings, like words, have meaning—often beyond the power of words to express, but nonetheless invaluable in making the chaos of our sensory perceptions comprehensible" (1986, p. xiii). For adolescent and adult students, applying techniques for tapping into different modes of thinking and perspective-taking can be valuable in second language learning (Andrade). Edwards applies the same belief in her approach to the teaching of drawing.

Christison refers to Edwards' book, *Drawing On The Right Side Of The Brain*, with respect to the "right brain" capacity to see things from a different perspective. By utilizing the types of activities that require the "right brain," where non-verbal reasoning dominates, students are able to approach language and culture from a broadened perspective. Through the creation of images, students have the opportunity to use skills that may be stronger for them than more traditional academic skills, granting students a more balanced, holistic, cognitive and educational experience.

For Christison, there is clearly a visible advantage to creating and perceiving another kind of image. She finds that art activities help teachers and students to take perspectives other than their own. She suggests that we view the world so much from our own experience, that when we go beyond that, it really opens up the doors of communication. The activities used to open these doors include unfinished pictures, self-portraits, cooperative drawings, and cultural collages. Christison finds that all students, even those who are initially hesitant, participate eventually. In her book, *Drawing Out* (1982), Christison adds that art activities have become integral, almost second nature, to her teaching.

Gardner (1985) suggests that there are similarities between one's human development and the artistic process, and that the workings of the human mind can be better understood once the artistic process is studied as a form of intellect. Shier and Arnheim (1969) both consider art a way of knowing in its own right. It is one form of intelligence. Boyer (1985) suggests that children need to use this with other intelli-

gences as tools for learning. Only by utilizing many kinds of knowledge can children reach the full potential of their mental abilities. When teachers integrate a variety of methods in their classrooms, their instruction is more apt to encompass and appeal to individual learning styles. Through this diversification of instructional content, a holistic "learning paradigm" is created (Shier, p. 314). Andrade maintains that consideration of multiple measures of intelligence can provide teachers with a wider assortment of effective instructional techniques and students with a more thorough learning experience.

In her rationale, Shier states that "the capacity of art to both connote and denote provides another way of knowing language" (p. 314). Franklin supports this idea in suggesting that writing and creating visual art enhance ESL children's learning about both verbal and artistic expression. Bassano and Christison state that the creation of visual artworks strengthens students' creativity and then helps students to develop vocabulary, improve comprehension, and think in the new language. Striker (1992) suggests a natural connection between art and language, and claims that artistic creation precedes and prepares linguistic development. She also stresses the need for teachers to become aware of the relationship between visual representation and verbal expression.

Tarr (1993) believes that affective, artistic activities are one way to achieve balance in education. Schooling, she believes, tends to be overly mechanistic and technical, and art is a necessary but missing element. According to Tarr, "Art speaks to the soul...it opens up people in mysterious ways." Art has the power to transform everything, and it is naturally an essential part of all life. Education without art is "dehydrated education, like a box of Lipton soup, lacking the spirit, authenticity, flavor and spice of grandma's homemade chicken soup."

Teachers have the duty to connect with the whole student: the body, the soul, and the intellect. Education speaks not only to the intellect: it also speaks to the soul. It is clear to Tarr that affective factors are natural and integral to second language learning and to human learning in general. Moreover, classrooms that fail to address this and respond to it creatively and professionally are incomplete at best.

Waldorf Education

Waldorf Education began in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919 when Emil Molt, the president of the Waldorf-Astorias Cigarette Factory, asked Rudolf Steiner to create a school for the children of the factory workers. Molt, who was considered a great humanitarian, asked Steiner to "design a curriculum to educate human beings who would be able to create a peaceful and just society " (Minnesota Waldorf School, 1992). With over 500 schools in more than thirty countries, Waldorf Schools represent the largest independent school system in the world. Steiner describes his educational philosophy in these words: "The heart of the Waldorf method is the conviction that education is an art—it must speak to the child's experience. To educate the whole child, his heart will and must be reached, as well as his mind" (Minnesota Waldorf School).

The Waldorf philosophy stresses the incorporation of artistic experiences in all subject areas (Harwood, 1967). With respect to the study of a second language, Steiner (1986) suggests that the development of a sense of the aesthetic is particularly important to language development. He believes that language is essentially logical, but that on a deeper level, it is creative. For him, learning a foreign language goes beyond grammar: the student must also be encouraged to develop an appreciation for the artistry of language. This may be thought of as one element of Steiner's rationale for the integration of art experiences with language learning.

Halverson and Olson (1993), foreign language teachers at the Minnesota Waldorf School in Roseville, confirm the importance of art. According to the Waldorf philosophy, art is seen as the spiritual element of human life, too often ignored in a materialistic society such as ours. Participation in art creation, according to Halverson, has a way of connecting us to certain parts of ourselves that often remain untapped. In the Waldorf School, this artistic or spiritual element is tapped as students and teachers together create art and color, exercising their imagination.

At the Waldorf School, reading is taught through visual images. Halverson believes that this connec-

tion has been made because of the historical pictographic development of letters and alphabets. She says that as the students go through the curriculum in a Waldorf School, they experience a type of "evolution of human consciousness." Thus, in learning to read and write, the students go back in time or consciousness to a level where letters and words have "more tangible reality for them." For example, the children will hear a story of "the swan swimming on the sea" and their illustrations of that story will gradually be abstracted to the letter "s." In that way, "s" holds more meaning for the children and is not a foreign symbol. In the second language classes, students are taught orally for three years before learning to read or write. Halverson comments that this results in fourth graders who can read and write German and French at a high level of difficulty from the outset.

Ping Sue Her (grade 3) designing his hot air ballon, "Nile Delta," getting inspiration from the Cairo skyline.

The children at Waldorf create their own textbooks throughout the school year and that activity contributes to their language learning. In the beginning, the students may copy some writings from the board about a story they have dictated to their teacher. Then they make illustrations for their story and form their own books. Later on these books become good references for what the students have learned throughout the year.

Olson advises always having a visual element of what the teacher is trying to express, otherwise the story makes little sense to the students. This can be especially effective if students create their own characters and props. Thus, the students take ownership and show pride and interest in the language. This visual component is very important for younger learners. The children's interest is often lost if the teacher does not do something to "create surprise or tickle them." Students are curious about teacher-created images, and they enjoy imitating the illustrations and narratives that go along with them.

Both teachers believe that visuals are a valuable way of communicating in the target language without having to translate to the native language. Olson described how she tells a story, draws it out, and moves visual elements of the story to illustrate action. The story is told completely in the second language!

In discussing their artistic activities in the language classes, Olson and Halverson point out that the projects are successful in that they connect well to other work in other subjects. This integration of content at the Waldorf School is often missing in other schools' curricula. One way, then, to see more evidence of the enhancement of language through art is to integrate art throughout the entire school's curriculum. Art not only benefits language learning, it benefits mathematics, science, social studies, and every other subject area that draws the students' interest.

Classroom Application

Judith A. Koller designed a unit on French Impressionism with several goals in mind. Linguistic goals focused on the development and enhancement of students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Cultural goals included the exploration and understanding of a significant artistic, cultural, and social movement. Humanistic goals centered on the development of a sense of community, cooperation, and teamwork. But the unit was written with one additional goal in mind: to explore the role of artistically inspired learning activities in the secondary-level second language classroom. Through the implementation of this unit, Koller sought to answer two questions. The first concerned how students of this age group would respond to being given an opportunity to create art in their language class. The second was whether or not such an opportunity would enhance their language-learning experience.

Because at the secondary level, the existing research on the art/language relationship seemed to be most sparse, this part of the research specifically targets high school students. High school language programs tend to neglect or, at best, de-emphasize the incorporation of non-verbal forms of expression into the language classroom. Such de-emphasis may be especially true of the visual arts, including drawing, coloring, and painting.

The curriculum unit was implemented with five sections of high school French students at three levels: third year, fourth year advanced placement, and fifth year. The unit combined language skills devel-

opment with the study of art history and the study of works of art. It required students to complete several writing projects and an original work of art. Students in all five classes were given class time in which to create their art work and to write. Thus the language classroom was transformed into a studio of sorts, and the students became, for a while at least, artists. The use of class time for the creation of artworks permitted Koller to observe and to speculate not only on the work the students produced, but also on the artistic process and the atmosphere of the classroom-turned-studio.

Approximately fifteen students chose to submit their work to Koller for the purposes of this research. Each contributed two pieces of work. The first was an art work done in crayon, colored pencil, chalk, or paint, and emulated Impressionist style and technique. The second was a French-language essay in which the students described and reflected upon their art work. The students' visual and written works were varied and personal, each reflective of the individual student's style of self-expression. Observations and reflections were made without regard to individual differences in artistic talent or to personal aesthetic preferences. The findings resulting from the implementation of the unit are summarized on the following pages.

Student Response to Art-Inspired Learning

The students in the five classes in which this curriculum unit was implemented knew from the beginning of the unit that they would eventually have the opportunity to try their hands at Impressionist artistic technique. The student-created images in this way provided a long-term goal for the students to anticipate and work toward as they explored French culture, history, artists, and art. The students seemed to look forward to creating their own works of art. When the day arrived for them to begin their artwork, though, some anxiety surfaced. This anxiety centered upon evaluation: some students voiced an understandable concern that their artwork would be graded according to its "quality." Their definition of "quality" was based on a particular concept of what is "good" art: that which is perceived as worthy of being framed, sold, and displayed. To alleviate their anxiety, two steps were taken. First, students were assured that the evaluation of their artwork, in which they would have a part (a self-evaluation is included in the unit), would be based entirely upon their efforts to apply what they had learned about the unique aspects of Impressionist painting. Second, students were encouraged to recall the fundamental belief underlying the Impressionist movement—that personal impressions, or interpretations, are paramount. Such personal works as the students created would not be judged on the basis of any predetermined notions of what is "good" art or what makes an artist "talented." Once the nature of the evaluation had been established, the students became clearly more relaxed, and displayed a good deal of interest and engagement in the artistic experience.

In getting started on their artwork, the students were asked to recall what an Impressionist artist such as Monet or Morisot might choose as his or her subject: for example, a nature scene or an ordinary person. Next, they discussed what the unit activities had taught them about Impressionist style and technique, such as imprecise forms, broad strokes of the brush, the effects of light on an object, and the use of pastel colors. The students then took their knowledge and applied it to their own artworks. They succeeded admirably; that is, they chose subjects and colors appropriate to Impressionist style, and rendered them in techniques reminiscent of Impressionism. The subjects of the students' images included an eclipse of the sun, a pair of ballet slippers, a picnic scene, a bridge over a stream, oceanside cliffs, hills dotted with flowers, sailboats, a chapel at dusk, and sunsets over water.[1] Sunsets were the most popular theme, recurring in several works; this is probably because the students had learned of the Impressionist artists' passion for the effects of sunlight on objects. The popularity of this theme and other outdoor scenes—the image of the ballet slippers was one of the few not incorporating the outdoors—suggests the students' internalization of the essence of Impressionism. Thus, the artworks serve as a vehicle for assessing student learning as a result of the curriculum unit.

[1] Unfortunately, it was a condition of this research that no student works, either artistic or written, be included in the paper in either original or reproduced form.

Although the students who requested help getting started represented a minority, their concern implies the importance of building context into artistic experiences in the language classroom. Striker stresses that just as a teacher would not give students a writing assignment without some guidance, students should not be expected to just spontaneously create art. This seems an especially important point with respect to the language classroom, which is for many students a stressful environment. Related to the importance of providing students with a context to guide their artistic creations is the notion of cognitive challenge. Because this curriculum unit focused on a particular artistic genre, the students were required to do more than simply draw a picture. They were expected to demonstrate their knowledge of Impressionist style and technique by applying elements of the genre in their own artwork. All students remained within the established parameters of Impressionist style and technique, yet no two images were alike or even very similar. For example, there were many unique variations on the sunset theme: suns ranged in color from pale yellow to bright pink, setting over water, in forests, or behind cliffs. Similarly, two students diverged from the quintessential Impressionist technique of broad brush strokes and used, instead, the tiny dots of Pointillism. An offshoot of Impressionism, Pointillism was also studied over the course of the unit. Students seemed to feel security in the parameters of subject, color, and technique, while at the same time taking pride in the uniqueness of their artistic creations.

That the students cared about their artwork was clear not only from their artworks themselves, but from the artistic process as well. Many students took extra time in choosing their paper. Different sizes and textures were provided to assist students in personalizing their artwork. Most were also highly selective of their medium; crayons and colored chalk were provided, but some students chose to supply their own colored pencils and watercolor paints. The students were equally selective of colors: all used pastels, shades which constitute a hallmark of Impressionist-style art, but in unique combinations. For example, one sunset was done all in pale gray and pale brown, while another was a veritable festival of color: vibrant pink, yellow, blue, green, and chartreuse. The time thus spent in planning the images they would create is certain evidence that the students cared about the project they were undertaking.

This positive attitude on the students' part toward their artistic process and products carried over to the general classroom atmosphere. It would be an understatement to say that the students were "on-task" during this part of the curriculum unit. Most were certainly engaged in the process of creating a work of art. But even more, the experience of working side-by-side lent an air of cooperation, sharing, and community to the classroom. For instance, some colors in crayons and chalk were limited in number; to facilitate the sharing of resources, several students moved their desks to form small work tables on which they piled crayons or chalk within the reach of everyone at the table. The students did this on their own initiative.

Even more inspiring, some students shared their unfinished images with classmates, and traded opinions or advice. Such behavior was rare for these students, who had not frequently been observed spontaneously sharing opinions on other types of expressive or communicative work, such as essays or oral presentations. The artistic experience thus seemed to encourage a greater sharing of work and ideas. Similarly, some students were openly admiring of the work of their classmates: on more than one occasion, one student called the teacher over to admire the artwork of another. This enthusiasm, admiration, and praise for the work of classmates is a phenomenon seldom before observed in these classes when the task was a verbal one.

To summarize, the key factors in the success of the experience include the following: a clearly articulated and non-judgmental evaluation procedure; a cognitively challenging artistic project; an established context and guidelines; and a positive attitude and supportive classroom atmosphere.

Second Language Enhancement

Turning now to the question of second language use, the students' essays provided a vehicle for examining their use of French in response to the artistic experience. While developing their Impressionist-style images, the students were asked to reflect on their work: especially, to consider what inspired them to select a particular subject and particular colors and techniques. The students would, upon completion

of their artwork, record their thoughts in a descriptive/reflective essay in French. In anticipation of this essay, the students had earlier written descriptive essays about famous Impressionist paintings. While no quantitative measure was done to compare the two essays written by each student, observations on the second essays prove insightful regarding the artistic experience and its relation to second language acquisition and use.

Many of the reflective essays were quite lengthy, even those of the less proficient students for whom writing long compositions posed a particularly significant challenge. Several of these essays were noticeably longer than the preceding essays, in which the students described works of well-known Impressionist artists. The increase in the amount written is partly attributable to the nature of the assignment: while the first essay was intended to be mostly descriptive, the second was to be both descriptive and reflective. But the increased length may also be a function of the students' caring about the task. The artworks they created with their own imagination and their own hands became a part of the students' personal experience; it is reasonable to believe that they had many ideas they wished to express about their own works. Whatever the reason, the ultimate benefit to students was increased French writing experience.

Related to the amount of writing students accomplished in their reflective essays are considerations of grammatical accuracy. No quantitative measure of accuracy, such as counting errors, was done, but general observations were made regarding the students' use of French in their writing. Almost without exception, the students drew extensively on new vocabulary learned over the course of the unit. Even where grammatical errors were present, the new vocabulary was consistently used appropriately; that is, it appeared in a context in which it made sense.

In terms of grammatical accuracy, then, the students succeeded in communicating in written French their reflections on their artwork. But more telling than *how* they communicated is *what* they communicated. The students all included a description of their work: the subject, the colors, the medium, the artistic techniques used. But more challenging to them was to reflect on their artwork: to explain, for example, why they chose a given subject or why their image was an example of Impressionist art. Many of the students met and exceeded this challenge.

Four Themes

From their written reflections, four principal themes emerge: interpretation of the symbolism in their artworks; expressions of liking for their artworks; expressions of positive feelings toward the artistic experience; and the identification of self as artist. Each of these themes will now be discussed in turn. First, some students wrote interesting interpretations of their work, finding in their images not just a subject rendered in pastels, but symbolism. For example, one student used chalk to create his impression of a boat manned by a lone sailor, moving rapidly in the wind; the artist wrote that "Plus important que le sujet, c'est l'émotion"[2] (More important than the subject is the feeling). Another student described her image of ballet slippers as having "l'aire gracieuse et équilibrée" (grace and poise). A third student who also chose to create an image of a solitary person on a sailboat wrote, "Il va chez lui après une longue journée. Tout se calme." (He is going home after a long day. Everything is calming down.) These personal interpretations suggest that the students genuinely cared about their artwork and had put a good deal of thought into it. The artwork seems to have motivated the students to express their thoughts in writing as well, with the result that they challenged themselves to stretch their use of written French beyond mere objective description.

The second theme is appreciation for their own artwork. In one example, the student expressed the conviction that her painting was a good example of French Impressionism. Another wrote that he liked his picture, although he wished to work on it even more. A third student was particularly enthusiastic; she wrote: "J'adore peindre! J'adore les fleurs et la nature, ainsi, je les ai peintes...j'aime cette composition assez bien." (I love to paint! I love flowers and nature, thus I painted them...I like this work quite well.)

[2] Where necessary, minor grammatical corrections have been made in the French-language quotations drawn from student essays.

Third, other students expressed in their writing positive feelings toward the artistic experience as a whole and to the genre of art they were producing. Several students expressed their love of nature, of pastel colors, and of Impressionist art. Such comments refer to essential elements of the Impressionist genre, and may thus be taken as indications that the students had learned as a result of the unit, and had applied this knowledge in their own artwork. In addition, the positive nature of their comments suggests that the students enjoyed the assignment to create an Impressionist-style work. Ultimately, both the knowledge and the enjoyment gave the students something more to write about.

Catriona Moore (center) with her third grade students (from left to right) Seng Vang, Chong Neng Thao and Her Pao Vang, writing travel logs for a hot air ballon race around the world.

Finally, some students identified themselves in their essays as artists, or compared themselves with famous Impressionists. One student, for example, stated that "Comme Monet, je préfère les sujets de la nature comme les marines et les paysages." (Like Monet, I prefer subjects that come from nature, like seascapes and countrysides.) Another opened his essay with the statement, "Cette peinture a été faite par l'artiste DuPont...Les sujets préférés de DuPont sont du dehors." (This painting was done by the artist DuPont...The favorite subjects of DuPont are those that come from the outdoors.)[1] This student went on to comment that the style of his image is "très impressionniste" (very impressionist). Regardless of whether or not these students viewed themselves as artists prior to the curriculum unit, the art creation seemed to help them to get in touch with their artistic side. Ultimately, this provided increased engagement in the artistic experience as well as in the writing.

To summarize, it is reasonable to conclude that the experience of creating a work of art was a positive one for these secondary students of French. Almost all of the students responded positively to the opportunity to create their own artwork: they devoted substantial time and effort to the artistic process, and created truly unique and personal images in Impressionist-inspired style. Moreover, the students' positive response to the creation of artworks had implications for the classroom, which became a community of artists sharing ideas and support. Finally, this positive attitude carried over into the students' written self-expression in French. In their essays students not only communicated effectively using new vocabulary, they also went beyond description to provide interesting insights into their artwork.

Implications for the Classroom

The theoretical and practical evidence presented in this paper makes a strong case for the integration of art-inspired learning experiences, specifically student-created visuals, into the second language classroom. Such experiences can benefit the total language learning experience. The use of art activities can help build an atmosphere of cooperation and community in the language classroom. In addition, it can increase student motivation and enthusiasm for language-oriented activities. Of paramount importance, art experiences can also lower the anxiety felt by many second language learners. This last point is an especially crucial one, because unchecked anxiety may interfere with students' motivation and even their learning. The integration of student-created visuals with language learning helps to focus students on the activity, allowing language to grow within the safety of a non-verbal task.

It may be argued that self-expression through art is also potentially threatening, since it leaves a lasting product vulnerable to criticism. But if students are assured in advance that the evaluation of their artwork will encompass neither "quality," "talent," nor personal aesthetic preferences, they will approach the artistic experience as Koller's students did, with zeal and confidence. It is also fair to argue that the Impressionist genre lends itself to a more relaxed approach to artistic creation, since this genre is by definition a highly personal form of artistic expression. But any artistic genre or movement can have the same positive effects on student motivation and classroom atmosphere. It is up to the teacher to help students realize that within any genre, no two artists produce identical interpretations of a given subject. Artistic

[1] Students who submitted work for the purposes of this research were assured that their identity would be kept confidential; therefore, a pseudonym has been substituted for this student's name.

expression is always personal, and it should be stressed to students that therein lies the value of art-inspired learning opportunities.

For young second language learners, art activities are generally accepted as appropriate. Beyond the elementary school, however, there is much more skepticism toward the use of art-inspired activities in the curriculum. Once basic verbal literacy has been established, the artistic element is left to wither. Yet artistic experiences can provide cognitively challenging content for secondary-level language learners. Koller's curriculum unit provides an example of how student-created visuals may be effectively combined with a broader unit of study. The unit's focus on the Impressionist genre provided built-in guidelines for the students' own artistic creations. By adding an element of cognitive challenge, the guidelines rendered the art activity appropriate to the age of the learners.

Likewise, Catriona Moore implemented a secondary ESL curriculum unit called "A Nation of Immigrants" while student-teaching at Como Park Senior High in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The circular process of writing, illustrating, responding, and revising resulted in a book, *The Call of Freedom* (1993). Sandra Hall, ESL mentor-teacher at Como Park, has been publishing similar collections of student writing in this manner for over ten years. The quality of work from this carefully planned, integrated approach to writing is always excellent.

Used with careful consideration for the age, language proficiency level, needs, interests, and experiences of the students, art-inspired learning experiences can play an invaluable role in the second language classroom. Educators who recognize this can incorporate art activities into their instruction to enliven and enhance language learning. In doing so, they can mobilize the language student's whole learning potential, rather than over-using the verbal thinking strategies upon which most education focuses so one-sidedly. Educators must respond to the fact that human beings express themselves both verbally and non-verbally, and that there is no clear line that separates these domains in real language or real life or real learning.

Teachers of language may do well to ask themselves just what it is about the artistic experience that fosters the development of language as well as the development of positive attitudes toward the language learning experience. Once teachers begin to tap into those factors, they will be able to enhance students' learning in all aspects of self-expression, the verbal as well as the non-verbal and artistic. It is hoped that this paper will results in future research in that direction.

We firmly believe that art and language are inextricably connected symbolic systems. The words of Boyer (1985, pp.8-9) convey the essence of this connection: "The visual arts are languages that reach all people at their deepest and most essential human level. Thus, aesthetic literacy is as basic as linguistic literacy...art is expression that words can't convey."

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ESL Community Puppeteers

by Margaret Canepa

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A couple of years ago, I found myself gazing at a window display of simple but fascinating hand puppets. As usual, my thoughts began to ramble back to the ESL classes that I teach. "Can puppets be an effective tool for teaching English?" Yes, I answered myself. There's little doubt of that. My mind raced on: "Wouldn't it be fun for ESL students to put on puppet shows for people in our community?" The students would undoubtedly enjoy meeting young children and sharing the stories that they had heard when they themselves were children. They might do this through the universal, time-honored tradition of the puppet theater.

The idea grew, and I began talking about it to Helen Harper, our academic coordinator at The American Language Institute of New York University. As part of our full time program, students select their afternoon classes from a program of content-based electives, choosing from several widely varied courses according to their own interests. In a content course, the focus shifts from direct concentration on a skill in English to other subjects. A well designed content course for ESL students should allow them to continue developing in all language skill areas, but involve them in real and holistic uses of the language. I suggested "Folktale and Puppet Workshop," with one of the goals of the class being a traveling puppet theater that would perform in elementary school classrooms. This would be an elective course that would involve students in a community activity, give them a chance to use English in real situations, and encourage their use of imaginative and creative language.

A frequent complaint of our foreign students concerns the difficulty in meeting Americans with whom they can practice speaking the language. I had been searching for ways to help my students make these kinds of connections and at the same time provide a format for a cultural exchange that would also benefit young Americans. Accordingly, I contacted several elementary teachers in New York—two at my daughter's school, P. S. 234 and others at the West Side Community School. All of the teachers would be very pleased to have a visit from a group of international students, and all of them found different and creative ways to work our visit into their curriculum. Ginger Hanlon teaches first grade at the West Side Community School and runs an after-school puppet club for young children. She and I began to work more closely together, planning several visits during the semester in which stories were exchanged, puppets were shared, and final puppet skits were performed for each other. The puppet workshop at the American Language Institute is now in its third semester, and has been quite a successful course that has realized all of my original goals.

Collecting Tales

Each semester, my students begin by collecting a number of folk tales. Working in small groups of three or four, students spend several classes telling folktales that they remember from childhood to each other. After telling the story once, they rotate to another group and tell the same story again until every group has heard everyone's story. As students retell the stories to each group, they gain in confidence and fluency. To help students find more stories to add to our collection, we visit the Bobst Library at New York University, where there is a good selection of folklore from many countries, both in English and in many of their languages. We also visit the neighborhood Jefferson Market Public Library which has an excellent children's section. The children's librarian, Elaine Thomas, is a very good story-teller, and our visit to her early in the semester gives the students a chance to hear her tell two or three stories from different countries. During our visit, students are encouraged to apply for a library card, and they then have

access to the children's collection of fairytales and puppet books. Assignments after this visit are to find a tale to present to the whole class and to write down one of the oral tales they heard from Ms. Thomas. Another possibility for a class activity is to reconstruct one of her stories and put it on the blackboard the next day in class. But the best source for stories is the students' own memories from childhood. Once they have begun to put those memories into English, I encourage them to research the tales and find other versions in English.

As the compilation of these tales continues, a great deal of language work is done with the stories. One activity—after a simple telling of a story which we put on the board—is to combine some of the sentences into more complex ones. We have many discussions about the differences between fairytales, fables, morality tales, legends, and myths. Cultural differences and universal lessons in the tales are explored. All the language skills are practiced as we collect the stories: reading and writing, listening and telling, and discussing meaning in this very rich source of language.

Writing Scripts

Once a good collection of stories has been put together, it is time to develop the scripts for the puppet skits. The class is divided into several small groups of two or three students. Each group must then write a script together for any story that they choose. It is usually one that we have become familiar with through our many tellings. As the scripts begin to develop, I become their language consultant. I help them find ways a puppet character might say something based on its personality. Probing the stories for meaning and emotion, we explore the levels of language—from formal to casual, from polite to aggressive and rude, discussing various phrases that possibly reflect what a character might say in a given scene. I asked, "What is this character feeling at this time?" We generate a list of possible expressions people might say in a particular situation. In one story, for example, a little frog dresses to go out, but his mother objects. What does she actually say? "Oh, son, please don't go out." or "Where do you think you're going, young man?" We build up a repertoire of phrases for use in various situations as needed according to mood and emotion or differing cultural behaviors.

As the scripting continues, the students make decisions about which characters they will create and play. At this point, I become an observer in the class, stepping back and letting the students use their own imagination. I encourage the class to begin thinking of themselves as a company that has to work together to accomplish a goal. I am there to answer questions, help with a word choice, suggest an expression or an idiom that is appropriate for the scene and plot. Circulating among the groups, I check progress or spot difficulties.

At first, the students see the scripts as finished products, something written in stone that must be committed to memory. When the first rehearsals begin, they try to read the scripts while manipulating the puppets they have made. This just doesn't work. As the rehearsing continues, and everyone becomes familiar with the whole repertoire of skits, the students become more inventive with the language and are able to paraphrase the lines. The stories have become internalized! Towards the end, students are able to switch parts and make up the dialogue as they go along. When this happens, I feel that our goal of using the language creatively has been accomplished in an exciting manner. Often a group of two or three students will have a script that has five or more characters in it. This means that a student may have to create and play more than one character, or borrow a puppet from another student to play a part in the skit. Sometimes a player from another group might have to be enlisted to help out. Students are forced to become versatile when performing in more than one tale.

Constructing Puppets

Before I began the first semester of this project, I thought we would purchase some puppets, but I soon realized that this was impossible for a variety of reasons. Traditionally, puppeteers build their own puppets, sets, theater, and props: so would we. Fortunately, I have a background in the arts, and I have done some work with a needle and thread, so it didn't seem beyond my capabilities. But what about the

students? Would they be willing to spend time making puppets when they had come here to focus on learning English? To my astonishment, there was a great deal of enthusiasm. As the semester got under way, for some students there was a danger of becoming so involved in making the puppets that it was hard to keep them on track with the script writing.

Two of Ms. Canapa's students rehearse with puppets.

During the first semester, I had some help from Naomi Machado, a puppet maker, who came to class and taught us a few basic techniques for making a simple felt puppet that fits over the hand. In later semesters, I, myself, was able to teach the students these same techniques. It is not necessary to have complex puppets. Children are able to relate to a puppet that is as simple as a sock over the hand with two eyes glued on. Fortunately, I have had several very creative people in the puppet class each semester, and they have inspired everyone else to greater efforts. At first, the time spent in making puppets was a source of concern, because after the initial lesson on how to make them, students began to revert to their own languages while working on the puppets. I decided that this was a good time to watch some videos or listen to audio tapes of fairytales. Providing a listening exercise while making puppets solved that difficulty and insured that the students were still on track with their primary goal—using English.

Making our own puppets is very important because it allows the student to become intimately involved with the character he or she creates, thereby having a personal investment in what that puppet says and does. Most of the students who have chosen the puppet workshop have been very willing to get involved in making the puppets, sets, and props. Those who don't feel successful in making the puppets find some other aspect of the class production where they have more confidence. After the initial puppet making has been done, perhaps in three or four sessions of class work, I encourage the students to finish their construction at home. Every few days, each puppet develops richer details in features and costumes. It is a wonderful experience to watch them take shape. It is as if the class suddenly grows in size as new characters become an integral part of our group!

New Puppets, New People

It is truly amazing to see what happens when students put on hand puppets and transfer their own voices to them. New personae are liberated! With practice, a shy, soft-spoken person learns to project quite a different personality. Now it is time to learn how to manipulate the puppets. I give a demonstration of how a puppet can be moved to express certain emotions. I knew nothing about this when I began, but I read everything I could lay my hands on. By now, I have collected enough information to give my students a very basic group of manipulations that help an audience believe that the puppet is really speaking and feeling. We have to remember that our audience is young children who are quite willing to suspend their belief systems to enter the realm of the imagination.

Once students master a few basic hand movements, we start to work with props. I give each pair of students an index card on which a brief situation is described, and ask them to improvise the scene with two puppets and the necessary props. The props are much more effective if their proportion in relationship to the puppet is oversized, so they can be easily seen by the audience. It also adds an element of comedy to see a puppet struggling with a giant treasure box or a huge book. It takes a little practice to manipulate the relatively large props with a puppet over the hand, but the students learn.

While doing these improvisations, students learn to pitch their voices to various levels and tones that suit different puppet personalities and characters. Some professional puppeteers admit to being quite shy when not hiding behind a puppet. Many ESL students have to break through a similar shyness barrier when trying out the new language. Once behind the scenes, they find the courage to speak up and take the risks involved, especially when they've created a voice that doesn't even sound like their own.

During the early improvizations with the puppets, I encourage students to use their imagination to

create the dialogues that go with the situations. Instead of writing them in advance, I want them to use the language spontaneously. I often record phrases on the board for future use because I want the students to avoid thinking it is necessary to perfectly memorize a script.

Once the scripted folktales are in full rehearsal, we work together designing the backdrops or special props. Sometimes we add some music or write words for a little opening song. Many little finishing touches are added, depending on the abilities and inventiveness of the students. For the puppet theater, we have constructed a lightweight structure of foam core board. Each semester, small improvements and designs embellish this simple three-sided, portable theater.

The Show Goes On

The most exciting part of the puppet class is watching what happens when the students get in front of their first audience and hear the children begin to respond to the stories. Of course the children have heard all of the stories beforehand, and they are very well prepared for our visits, but there is just something magical in the puppet performances that draws them in. They offer comments to the puppets, and they ask questions during the performance. The puppeteers suddenly respond to their audience, adding phrases and actions that they never thought of doing before. They start hamming it up, and the energy level is very high. After the performances, we usually sit down with the children and share our puppets with them. They have so many questions to ask the puppeteers. This gives my students a chance to interact with native speakers. Somehow, speaking with a six year-old is less threatening than speaking to an adult.

One of the last activities that we do in the semester is a performance for other ESL students at the Institute. Several teachers have also attended this performance in the past. For the puppeteers, this is the most difficult part to face, but they have had so much practice performing the skits with the children that they do quite a good job. The other international students have also been wonderfully appreciative viewers and have enjoyed seeing and hearing familiar stories from their childhood performed in English.

The Folktale and Puppetry Workshop realizes all of my original goals and continues to be stimulating to me as a teacher. The interesting and rich source of the folktales provides many avenues to explore the language. New skills in English are developed in imaginative and creative ways as students put together and perform a repertoire of skits outside the classroom. Contact is made with native speakers, and students gain access and take advantage of many local resources in the community. A cultural exchange between the ESL students and young Americans is rewarding for both groups. The students who have taken this workshop have told me how much it helped them with English and how much they enjoyed becoming community puppeteers!

Using Songs to Introduce Poetry to ESL Students

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by Loretta Frances Kasper

While short stories and novels are routinely used in ESL reading classes, poetry is often neglected because of its extensive use of figurative language. Understanding the meaning of such language requires inference and interpretation, making it less obvious and so, more difficult for ESL students. Yet, poetry has the power to stimulate the imagination and motivate students to be creative in their use of the English language and is well deserving of attention at all levels.

Whereas traditional poetry may be somewhat intimidating for ESL students, songs evoke and suggest themes and emotions through their melodies as well as through their words. In short, they offer a more comfortable and less threatening access to the excitement of this literary genre. After listening to a song, students can explore and share, both in discussion and in writing, the feelings the song evokes in them. The class can then discuss the literary or poetic techniques, as well as the themes, present in the song, and then apply what they have learned to more formal poetry.

In this paper, I will describe a method for using songs to introduce ESL students to poetry and to the literary techniques used in poetry (Kasper, 1993). I will detail a two-part lesson built around the song, "At Seventeen" by Janis Ian and the poem, "Beautiful Old Age" by D.H. Lawrence. This will provide one example of how to use a song to introduce a poem with a corresponding theme. A list of additional songs and poems is provided in the Appendix. The lesson described takes approximately four hours of class time, and may be taught to an Intermediate or Advanced level class. The overall lesson theme is: Reality vs. Expectation, examined at two stages of life, youth and old age.

The first part of the lesson focuses on youth, and students study the popular song, "At Seventeen," which evokes reminiscence and nostalgia about a period of life which, for many, was bittersweet. Students identify with the feelings expressed in the song, and so, are encouraged to speak and to write about their own feelings at seventeen. The second part focuses on old age, and students consider the poem, "Beautiful Old Age." In that second part of the lesson, students apply the concepts and techniques taught in the context of that particular song to Lawrence's poem. Finally, students write an essay comparing the themes of the song and the poem.

The lesson, which integrates the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, consists of a four-stage approach suggested by Gajdusek (1988) to maximize students' comprehension of the text. The four stages are (1) the prereading stage, (2) the factual stage, which consists of listening to and reading the song or the poem, (3) the discussion and analysis stage, which examines in detail the literary techniques used and the themes present in the song or the poem, and (4) the extending activity stage, in which students write a narrative or expository essay based on the theme of the song or the poem.

"At Seventeen"

A prereading exercise in vocabulary development opens the first part of the lesson. The students are given a list of new and unfamiliar words in the song and asked to guess meanings after they are put into the context of a sentence. The next prereading exercise is designed to introduce the students to the topic of the song and to get them personally involved in the material. They are asked to describe the expectations people have of life at seventeen, and then the reality of life at seventeen. Their answers are written on the board. This activity provides everyone with insight into the cross-cultural differences in the life and behavior of the seventeen-year-old.

Next, a tape of the song "At Seventeen" is played. After students have listened to it, they are asked to

describe the tone of the song and the emotions it elicits in them. They are then given the song's lyrics and a handout defining various poetic techniques, including rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and personification. The students go through the song and line-by-line, describe the rhyme, and identify examples of alliteration, personification, and symbolism.

We then discuss and analyze the song in terms of the theme, tone, and the effect of the poetic techniques used. I ask them to answer the following questions: "What is the truth that Janis learned at seventeen? Why did Janis feel the way she did? What caused her to have those feelings? How old do you think Janis was when she wrote the song? What clues in the song led to your answer?"

After the poetic techniques, tone, and themes of the song have been discussed in detail, students listen to the song once more, with the lyrics in hand. By this time, almost all of the students are singing along with the tape.

The extending activity for this lesson is a writing assignment on the following topic: "Describe an important event that happened to you when you were 17. How did it affect you at the time? Why do you remember it now? What significance or importance did the event have in your life? Was the effect temporary or permanent? What similarities or differences were there between your expectations of what would happen and what, in reality, did happen." This activity provides the students with the opportunity to express their own feelings and experiences and in so doing to synthesize what they have learned.

"At Seventeen" is an excellent song to use to introduce ESL students to the world of poetry because it contains many poetic techniques, yet it is relatively easy for ESL students to understand. Moreover, the song stimulates student involvement in the lesson by activating personal memories, so that students identify with the emotions expressed. My own students have produced insightful and often poignant essays describing their memories of life at seventeen. In producing these pieces, they needed to make creative use of the English language to convey the emotions they felt at seventeen. The results of this lesson were very satisfying both to me and to my students as we all remembered and explored through our imaginations what life was like at seventeen.

"Beautiful Old Age"

The basic format for part two of the lesson is the same as that used for part one. It begins with a prereading exercise which introduces and develops new vocabulary. In the second prereading activity, students are asked to describe what they think old age should be like, and what it is really like. Their answers are written on the board.

Next, I read the poem aloud as the students listen, and I ask them to describe the tone of the poem and how it makes them feel. I then hand out the text of the poem, and we talk about the poetic techniques used and their effect in the poem. Lawrence uses many visual and other sensory images in the poem, and I ask the students to describe what they see, hear, smell, taste, and feel as they read it.

Students are given comprehension questions which require that they interpret Lawrence's attitudes, images, and the message he is trying to convey in the poem. We discuss Lawrence's attitudes about what leads us to a beautiful old age. We talk about Lawrence's view of truth in life, and then we contrast his view with Janis Ian's view of truth. We examine the difference between the expectations people have of old age and the reality of old age; we analyze Lawrence's suggestions for how people can make those expectations become reality, and we decide whether we agree with his suggestions. The lesson concludes with a second reading of the poem, this time by one of the students. By this point in the lesson, students have gained confidence in their ability to read and appreciate poetry in English.

As in part one of the lesson, a writing assignment provides the extending activity for this part of the lesson. This writing assignment not only provides an extension of the poem itself, but also requires that students consolidate what they have learned in the two parts of this lesson. The topic for the writing assignment is: "Lawrence states that a truthful life leads to a beautiful old age. Do you agree or disagree? Are there other characteristics of one's life that can lead to a beautiful old age? Compare/contrast Lawrence's image of old age with Janis Ian's image of youth at seventeen. Do you think Janis would

agree with Lawrence's vision of a beautiful old age? Explain your answer and be sure to use specific examples from 'At Seventeen' and 'Beautiful Old Age'."

A final step in this lesson may be an additional writing assignment which requires students to draw upon the themes expressed in both works and apply them to life in general. The topic for this writing assignment is:

Dr. Kasper compares a poem by D.H. Lawrence to a song by Janis Ian.

"Many people, as they get older, believe that 'youth is wasted on the young.' They believe that youth is the best time of life, but when we are young, we do not appreciate how good our life is. They say it isn't until we get older that we appreciate the 'good old days.' Do you agree that youth is the best time of a person's life? Support your opinion with specific examples."

In addition to the activities described, students are encouraged to write their own poems in English. They may be given topics that build upon the theme of the lesson, or left free to choose their own topics. They are instructed to include some of the poetic techniques discussed and to make their poems as vivid as possible. This type of activity allows students to use their imaginations and helps to consolidate and concretize learning.

Conclusion

Using songs to introduce poetry helps ESL students to feel more comfortable with poetic language and techniques, to understand poems more easily, and to appreciate this often neglected literary genre. By teaching poetry to our ESL students, we provide them with a richer and fuller experience of the English language. We allow them to experience this richness through their personal involvement with the emotions and the attitudes expressed by the poet. Thus, we stimulate their imaginations and foster their creative use of the language.

Appendix

Songs and Poems with Corresponding Themes

Theme: ***Brotherhood/Humanity***

Song: "Imagine" by John Lennon
Poem: "Any Human to Another" by Countee Cullen

Song: "We Are the World" by USA for Africa
Poem: "I Am the People, the Mob" by Carl Sandburg

Song: "Ebony and Ivory" by Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson
Poem: "To My Brothers Everywhere" by Elias Lieberman

Theme: ***Mortality/Man versus Time***

Song: "Dust in the Wind" by Kansas
Poem: "Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Song: "The Windmills of Your Mind" (from "The Thomas Crown Affair")
Poem: "Ah, Sunflower" by William Blake

Song: "Memory" by Andrew Lloyd Weber, T.S. Eliot, and Trevor Nunn
Poem: "Preludes" by T.S. Eliot

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Stimulating Imagination Outside the Classroom

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by Stephen A. Sadow

The role of the imagination need not end when students leave the classroom but can continue to play an essential part in language learning. Activities that stimulate the imagination help students to learn on their own and to take more responsibility for their own progress. Homework, for example, can be more compelling than the often tiresome workbook pages and pre- and post-reading assignments. Instead, structured assignments, tailor-made to any student who requests them, can be devised. At other times, a single imaginative task can be given to an entire class. Ideally, these tasks provide students a frame or template upon which to build their own ideas and conclusions. In this paper, those frames are discussed and specific kinds of assignments are suggested.

Frame Theory

Whatever the task chosen, it should stimulate intrinsic motivation, make use of language skills already attained, and provoke creative thinking. Psychologist Teresa Amabile (1989) has shown that intrinsic motivation—doing something for the enjoyment or satisfaction of it—is crucial to creative production. Edward Deci (1992) calls for "optimal challenge," or pushing students a little bit beyond what they think they can do, but not so hard as to cause frustration. Perhaps most important, students should be provided with a frame (sometimes called a "schemata") upon which to develop their own ideas. With rare exception, simply telling students to "use their imagination" has disappointing results. E. Paul Torrance (1970) pointed out many years ago that assignments should be ambiguous and structured only enough to give clues and direction, to require taking the next step beyond what is known, and to allow for many solutions. Torrance argued that ambiguity and change of perspective affect student participation in both quality and quantity. In short, students were to be steered toward figuring things out for themselves .

"Frame theory"—which involves a set of still-tentative concepts known in artificial intelligence, linguistics, and literary criticism—provides a powerful tool for use in formulating imaginative tasks. Computer scientist Marvin Minsky (1986, p. 245) defines " frames" as

> a sort of skeleton, somewhat like an application form with many blanks or slots to be filled. We'll call these blanks its "frames"; we use them as connection points to which we can attach other kinds of information. For example, a frame that represents a "chair" might have some terminals to represent a seat, a back, and legs, while a frame to represent a "person" would have some terminals for a body and head and arms and legs...As soon as you hear a word like "person," "frog," or "chair," you assume the details of some "typical" sort of person, frog, or chair. You do not do this only with language, but with vision, too...Default assignments are of huge significance because they help us represent our previous experience. We use them for reasoning, recognizing, generalizing, predicting what may happen next, and knowing what we ought to try when expectations aren't met. Our frames affect every thought and everything we do. Frames are drawn from past experience and rarely fit new situations perfectly.

According to frame theory, hierachical mental structures, created through extended experience, make it possible for people to recognize new versions of places, things, relationships, and linguistic forms. A refrigerator is recognized as a refrigerator even if the size, configuration and power source differ from the familiar. Remembered forms are not only quickly identified, they are generally added to by thoughts and feelings currently present. The refrigerator may bring forth thoughts of furnishing a newly purchased

house or of having to make a trip to the dump. Most often frames carry sub-frames—a house frame may contain wall and roof frames, for instance. Partial or unfinished frames are inherently unstable; most people feel a need to finish them by "filling in the blanks" or "connecting the dots."

Frames can be broken, and when they are, the results can be humorous, disturbing and even shocking. Analyzing the literary movements of Dada and Surrealism, critic Inez Hedges (1983) shows how artists such as André Breton, whose bizarre stories, and Luis Bunuel, whose horrifying juxtaposition of images like eyes and straight razors, jolted the expectations (frames) of their public. On the other hand, she adds "frame-making is a more specifically cognitive activity, relying on strategies of understanding that the perceiver has learned though experience" (p. 39). In general, frames are critical in the projects described below, and "frame-breaking" is often a source of additional interest and humor.

Doing the Projects

Stimulating the imagination of individual students most effectively may mean working with each student separately to establish a mutually acceptable project theme. These projects may become credit-bearing honors courses or independent studies. In other cases, a few selected students or, where practical, each student in a class can choose a more restricted task to be done outside of class and completed within a specified time. While projects involving all language skills can be concocted, focusing on one skill—e.g. listening or writing—has proved more workable.

Students are asked to choose the skill they would most like to work on. They are then given a list of relevant projects, some of which have been completed by previous students, and some that the teacher simply thinks might work. They are told to treat these topics as suggestions and come back in a few days with a proposal of their own. When they return, a teacher-student negotiation ensues with the teacher prodding on one hand and setting limits on the other. Not all projects involve a high level of imagination—some students do insist on writing a diary of the ups and downs of their classes and fragile romances—but most opt for a more creative course of action. During the term, students "check-in" on an irregular basis, asking for help or clarification when they need it. Once in a while, when a mid-course correction is called for, a project may be adjusted (by mutual consent) or even scrapped in favor of a more promising one.

Assignments made to the class as a whole are simpler to organize. While these assignments are not individualized, they still provoke a wide variety of imaginative responses. An imagination-stimulating task or device is announced as any homework assignment would be. Students are asssured that original responses are valued, but that the task must be taken seriously. When the tasks are completed, results are compared in class.

Example Projects: Writing

Fantasy Journals: Instead of the daily recording of studies, social life, and work, the fantasy journal requires the student to take on another persona, inhabit a different environment and perhaps a different time. The student chooses the time and place, and then spins the yarn. Length of entries is agreed upon in advance; the story is to progress coherently and not atomize into unrelated segments. A simple version of this task would be to have students fantasize about themselves in an alternate life to the one they are living. More challenging, a student can concoct, day-by-day, an inter-stellar journey or life in a First World War batallion. The journal becomes a set of related anecdotes or, if especially well done, a novella. In one intermediate Spanish course, a young bride was the heroine of a tale set in the turmoil of the Spanish Civil War; in another journal, an astronaut visited Spanish-speaking planets in far-off galaxies.

Problem-solving: In a different sort of project, students respond in writing to a series of problems which call for imaginative responses. They are asked to design and describe a crest and a time capsule for themselves. They are told to invent a new board game or plan a new town. They put together a nutritious menu for a homeless shelter and plan a guided tour of their neighborhood. In all cases, the topics are ambiguous. The questions are phrased so as not to contain readily identifiable names, places, products, or

slogans which would act to direct or limit thinking. (Calling a city "Watertown," for example, tends to focus thinking on floods or fishing). Problems for which there actually is one preferred solution—such as how to build a suspension bridge—are avoided. In one problem, the student is told that after long negotiations, the executives of Smith & Co., makers of clocks, and Jones & Co., makers of electric appliances, have reached an agreement for the merger of the two companies. There are only three problems yet unresolved. The new agreement is in danger because the two groups cannot reach a compromise about a name for the new company; in a similar fashion, they have not been able to settle on a logo or a slogan. Heated discussions have led nowhere. In desperation, they have decided to communicate with you, a well-known commercial artist and highly experienced consultant. They request that you find an original and appropriate name (Smith & Jones is not acceptable), that you design an eyecatching emblem, and that you invent a slogan that will reflect the spirit of the new company. (Translated from Sadow, 1989, p.58)

Toasting Dr. Sadow in an imaginary situation are his students (from left to right) Tony Manganello, Katie Jones, Claudia Ceraso, Patti Batsinelas, and Roy Frost

Recombinant: Students can compose examples of almost any familiar genre, from obituaries and cereal boxes to morality plays and movie scripts. After identifying the frames upon which to build their compositions, students then twist them to their own purposes. By rearranging the component parts of a well-known genre like the horror film or the fable, students remake it in modern dress or wherever their fantasy takes them. Two examples follow:

1. Write the postcard that Christopher Columbus could have sent from Cuba in 1492 to Luis Santángel, a friend who stayed back home in Spain. Design the illustration that would have appeared on the other side of the card.
2. The editors of Geoqraphicus magazine are always looking for articles about little known places. They ask that you, as a highly experienced traveler, write an article in which you describe a remote and fascinating place. It doesn't matter if you make up some details. No one will know the difference!

As a follow-up, students can invent logos and slogans for themselves and then write out a description of their creations.

The inclusion of archetypal concepts and figures can make an activity even more compelling. For example, the student learns that:

> Heraclautus, wiseman, entertainer, and teller of myths in the faraway country of Grekia, has run out of tales. After so many stories about Zeus and Hera, Apollo and Diana, he simply cannot think of anything more to add. That wouldn't be so bad except for the fact that Heraclautus is under contract to produce four new myths a year—one for each season. Having heard that you know a great deal about myths and how they are made, Heraclautus urgently requests that you help him out. He asks that you invent a new myth. You may use traditional Greek characters or make up your own. Remember that in myths, gods act like humans. The mythical stories contain messages and morals that teach us about human life.

Another student is told that a book has arrived in damaged condition: a tale must be reconstructed from pictures of a dragon, an evil sorcerer, a idealistic young knight, a damsel, a cave, and an amulet.

A related technique has students replicating a magazine written in the target language. The student can write and edit a version by playing with the conventions of a particular popular magazine. While exaggeration is desired, the basic format is kept. Similarly, stories can be built (or rebuilt) from one line—"An unexpected letter arrived in Thursday's mail" or "It was now or never."

Listening

Eavesdropping: Imaginative listening tasks also build on what is known. Students can simply be asked to listen in on several L2 conversations. Normally these are not hard to find, even for the lesser taught languages. Foreign students congregate in the cafeterias of most American colleges and universities. Students of English as a second language are of course surrounded by English conversation, whereas American Sign Language chitchat can be observed at deaf clubs. Eavesdropping—listening in on L2 conversations from a discreet distance—forces even advanced students to piece together overheard words and phrases in an attempt to establish what is being said. (This exercise can include a study of gesture, touching, facial expression, social distance, and a raft of other sociolinguistic features.) Eavesdropping on groups is also possible, though it may be necessary to watch from a greater distance. Turn taking, silences, and male-female interactions can be observed. Each listening-in period takes five to ten minutes: it is hard to be inconspicuous for longer than that. Immediately after listening, students jot down everything they have heard and seen.

One-liners: From a teacher-made audiocassette, the student listens to exclamations and parts of conversations that might have been overheard at a noisy party. The segments are random and unrelated. For instance, a student might hear: "I can't believe she said that to him!"; "Two months in Europe? Incredible"; or "Charlie got married? When?" After listening once to each example, the student jots down ideas about what it was really about or writes out the dialogue that preceded and followed it.

Soundbites: In a more elaborate use of the teacher-developed audiotape, students listen to recorded segments—not more that three minutes in length—of simulated advertising, radio drama, weather reports, events calendars, or other common audio formats. While very advanced students can handle material modeled closely on that heard on radio or television, teacher-made materials are preferable in that vocabulary, rate of speech, and even type of humor can be controlled. The instructor, aided by one to three histrionic native-speakers, can mimic (or exaggerate) and tape well known spoken formats. Armed with the necessary vocabulary, the student listens to the tape segment and reacts to it as directed, choosing which clothes to buy after listening to competing advertising, or planning a day's tourism after listening to an account of a day's happenings. In one bit, a platitudinous politician begins a speech, but a fit of coughing forces him to stop. The student, as a loyal party member, is asked to fill in and complete the oration. In another, a head waiter recites a sumptuous and varied menu; the student must order dinner. In a 90-second soap opera scene, Nilda must choose between the steady and concientious Ricardo and the charming and devil-may-care Eduardo. Unexpectedly, the writer of the soap opera quits; the student must come up with the next scene. Student reactions to what is heard are jotted down as notes or in a short composition or dialogue.

Speaking

Data Gathering: Individual students can of course practice speaking outside of the classroom by locating native speakers and engaging them in conversation. While not truly imaginative exercises, these conversations may be framed so they become investigative interviews in which cultural data is collected, sorted out, and later compared. Child-rearing practices, the meaning of success and failure, and the importance of the work ethic are only some topics that can be explored by students acting as anthropologists.

Toasts: Students can practice short imaginative speeches and then present them to a group. Giving a toast is a familiar format that readily brings forth affective and imaginative responses. Students make up toasts to elementary school, high school or college teachers. The are informed that:

> Mr. John Augustus, a teacher here for forty years, is retiring. In two weeks there will be a banquet in his honor. Since you are clearly favorite students, it would be an excellent gesture if you could write a short speech in Augustus' honor. Be sure to tell how he influenced your life. Be prepared to give the toast at the banquet.

Students can toast a winning (or losing) football coach or team or an actress, all of whose movies they have seen. The toasts should be formulaic and can be worshipful or maudlin.

Show and Tell: Students prepare short speeches in which the theme is somewhat skewed. They must

try to sell vacations at a resort where it always rains or explain the advantages of a vacuum cleaner that doesn't work. They explain a game they played as a child or give a book report about a nonexistent text.

The Real Thing: Students can react to realia such as an actual ad, contest, or announcement. Later they tell the class what they have would have done. Using just one big city newpaper, they can make plans for a weekend getaway including restaurants, hotel, and theatre. They can interpret the news, including the local slant on American politics. They can check on their friends' horoscopes, enter contests, and even bet on the horse races.

Final Thoughts

There are of course many other things students can do on their own. They can watch old movies on L2 television, communicate with students in other lands by e-mail, volunteer to work in social agencies where L2 is used, or just read. Activities done individually should stimulate the imagination and in doing so increase intrinsic motivation and provide "optimal challenge." Through conscious use of frames and frame-breaking as well as a bit of humor, the student's imagination can increase the quality and the pace of language learning outside the classroom.

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Teaching English Through Broadway Musicals

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by Gina Milano

Using songs and videos of well known musical plays can be a stimulating alternative for ESL classes at any level of proficiency. The language in musicals like *Oklahoma* and *Singin' in the Rain* is straightforward and idiomatic; the plot is easy to follow; and drama, romance and beautiful music are plentiful. As a supplement to the classroom, it is a source of exceptional energy and excitement that almost always meet with success.

Bringing musicals to the classroom provides wonderful opportunities to expand vocabulary and gain familiarity with colloquial expressions and certain grammatical structures. Exploring musical videos can also create an awareness of American speech patterns and non-verbal expression. Furthermore, students benefit from exposure to the variety of socio-cultural issues that are addressed in many musicals.

Not to be underestimated is the musical itself. Think of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," "Summertime," "If I Loved You," "Singin' in the Rain." These timeless classics are a part of us, our culture, even language. Many of our students are also familiar with these melodies, and for them it is especially satisfying to learn the words. For those who are unfamiliar with American musical theater, it is an important introduction and one that has added a new dimension to some lives.

I began working with musicals when I was teaching an elective course entitled "English through Broadway" at Hunter College in New York. Actually, the inspiration came from the students themselves—particularly those from Japan—who expressed great interest in musical theatre. They had often asked where they could get inexpensive theatre tickets and what the best shows on Broadway were. At the time, I was involved in a community theater group that performed shows, so I had an interest in and a familiarity with the subject.

I chose eight different musicals that were on commercially available videotapes. I would first summarize the story and talk briefly about the characters. Then we would listen to one or two of the songs and do exercises such as the one described below. From there, we progressed to watching a few important scenes and discussing them in terms of plot, historical context, social implications, and cultural relevance. After the students had become familiar with the musical as a whole, we practiced and performed songs, dialogues and even dance steps. The class culminated in an afternoon at a live performance of a Broadway show.

The musical is the United States' most significant contribution to the theatre. It is purely American as an art form with a broad appeal, not only to sophisicated music lovers, but to ordinary citizens. Undoubtedly, my success with this genre has been due in part to the richness of the material—beautiful songs, humor, powerful dialogue, and love stories, all readily accessible to the teacher on the video.

This form encompasses a wide variety of topics, some quite serious: racism and prejudice in *South Pacific;* religious persecution in *Fiddler on the Roof;* the tragedies of war in *Hair;* the rise of Nazism in *Cabaret* and *The Sound of Music;* American farm life in *Oklahoma;* and show business in *Gypsy.* Even if the story takes place in another country or culture, it can be used as a basis of comparison with the USA. For example, *My Fair Lady* can be used to illustrate differences between American and British English or simply to emphasize clear, deliberate pronunciation. (A favorite clip with students from this movie is the scene in which Eliza Dolittle finally perfects her "refined'" English and sings "The Rain in Spain." Our students, who can easily relate to Eliza's struggle and frustration with the language, are also inspired by her success.) *West Side Story* can highlight tensions between Anglo and Latino culure. The movie *Hair* depicts life in the 1960's including Hippies, long hair, the Vietnam war, and defiance of authority. All of

these issues have had a lasting effect on the American psyche and are very adaptable to the wide variety of content areas discussed in the ESL classroom.

Although actual experience with musicals is welcome, any teacher—with or without a musical ear—can use this method. Simply choose excerpts of dialogues and songs from musicals that are in some way related to a vocabulary lesson, pronunciation emphasis, grammatical structure or subject of topical interest that is being covered in a particular class. Then, transcribe the lyrics or dialogue and work it into as few or as many classes as you like. To minimize teacher preparation, publications of musical plays in their entirety can be acquired (addresses given below).

Using musical theater is not contrived as so many ESL lessons can be. It's authentic English, educational, gives cultural insights and frequently brings joy to the classroom.

Teaching Techniques

The following is a typical lesson plan using the song "My Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music*.

1. The students are briefly given background about the musical itself: the story, the context in which it takes place, and the pertinent characters.
2. They listen to the song on cassette tape and arrange the phrases in the order in which they are heard.
3. After hearing the song several times, the students are familiar with the melody. They are then asked to write their own stanza to "My Favorite Things" substituting their favorite things while maintaining the rhythm of the music. (This is quite a difficult task, yet some students are extraordinarily creative with this exercise. One student commented that he now understands the challenges that song-writers have of putting words to music. Incidentally, you can apply this technique to almost any kind of music such as rap, rock, country, and pop as long as there is some consistency in the rhythm and lyrics.)
4. Finally, and regardless of who can or cannot carry a tune, we sing the song together.

"My Favorite Things"

Raindrops on roses
And whiskers on kittens,
Bright copper kettles
And warm woolen mittens,
Brown paper packages
Tied up with string—
These are a few of my favorite things.

Cream colored ponies
And crisp apple strudel,
Doorbells and sleighbells
And schnitzel with noodles,
Wild geese that fly
With the moon on their wings—
These are a few of my favorite things.

Girls in white dresses
With blue satin sashes,
Snowflakes that stay
On my nose and eyelashes,
Silver white winters
That melt into springs—
These are a few of my favorite things.

My Favorite Things

Listen to the song and put each stanza in its proper order by numbering each line.

_____ Bright copper kettles
_____ Raindrops on roses
_____ And whiskers on kittens
_____ And warm woolen mittens
_____ Brown paper packages
_____ These are a few of my favorite things.
_____ Tied up with string

_____ Cream colored ponies
_____ And schnitzel with noodles
_____ Wild geese that fly
_____ And crisp apple strudel
_____ These are a few of my favorite things.
_____ With the moon on their wings
_____ Doorbells and sleighbells

_____ That melt into springs
_____ Silver white winters
_____ These are a few of my favorite things.
_____ Snowflakes that stay
_____ Girls in white dresses
_____ On my nose and eyelashes
_____ With blue satin sashes

When the dog bites,
When the bee stings,
When I'm feeling sad,
I simply remember
My favorite things
And then I don't feel so bad.

_____ My favorite things
_____ When the bee stings
_____ When the dog bites
_____ I simply remember
_____ And then I don't feel so bad.
_____ When I'm feeling sad

Now write your own stanza to "My Favorite Things." Write about the things which are favorite, but remember that you must keep the rythm of the music.

_____ *and* _____
_____ *and* _____
_____

These are a few of my favorite things.

Appendix

Musical sources other than those previously mentioned

The Wizard of Oz, Harold Arlen, E.Y. Harburg
Cats, Andrew Lloyd Weber, Tim Rice
Porgy & Bess, George and Ira Gershwin
Carousel, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein
Peter Pan, Betty Comden, Adolph Green
Showboat, Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein

Individual show tunes that can be used in the language class

"Put an a Happy Face," from *Bye, Bye Birdie*, by Charles Strouse, Lee Adams
"Good Morning Starshine" and "Easy to be Hard," from *Hair*, by Galt MacDermont, Gerome Ragni, James Rado
"I'll Do Anything," from *Oliver*, by Lionel Bart
"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and "If I only Had a Heart," from *The Wizard of Oz*, by Harold Arlen, E.Y. Harburg
"The Rain in Spain" and "If I only Had a Heart," from *My Fair Lady*, by Alan Jay Lerner, Frederick Lowe
"If I were a Rich Man" and "Sunrise, Sunset," from *Fiddler on the Roof*, by Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick
"I Won't Grow Up," from *Peter Pan*, by Betty Comden, Adolph Green
"Memory," from *Cats*, by Andrew Lloyd Weber, Tim Rice
"All I Ask of You," from *The Phantom of the Opera*, by Andrew Lloyd Weber, Charles Hart
"Oh What a Beautiful Morning," from *Oklahoma*, by Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein
"Ole Man River," from *Showboat*, by Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein
"Singin in the Rain" and "Good Morning," from *Singin' in the Rain*, by Arthur Freed, Nacio Brown
"Somewhere" and "America," from *West Side Story*, by Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim
"Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend," from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, by Jules Styne
"Cabaret," from *Cabaret*, by John Kander, Fred Ebb
"Summertime," from *Porgy & Bess*, by George and Ira Gershwin
"Try to Remember," from *The Fantasticks*, by Harvey Schmidt
"Let Me Entertain You" and "Together," from *Gypsy*, by Jules Styne, Stephen Sondheim

If you teach children

Some of the Disney musicals are wonderful: *Mary Poppins, Jungle Book, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin*, etc.

Sources

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Complete librettos or screenplays are available from the following sources:

Actors' Heritage, 262 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036—(212) 944-7490 (catalogues available)
The Drama Bookshop, 723 7th Avenue, New York, NY 10019—(212) 944-0595

Beyond MTV:
Music Videos as Foreign Language Text

by Thomas J. Garza

Dr. Thomas J. Garza is assistant professor and coordinator in the Department of Slavic Languages at the University of Texas at Austin. He has lectured and conducted teacher development sessions in the U.S., Russia, Ukraine, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Armenia, and Belorus, demonstrating the use of authentic broadcoast video in foreign language teaching.

Rock music videos are rarely, if ever, referred to as "text," even in the broad definition of the term in foreign language pedagogy. Indeed, while this much-maligned medium may claim responsibility for setting trends in popular music, fashion, and culture, it does not often appear in the syllabus of print, audio and video materials used in the development of language skills. And yet, the well-selected music video clip may provide precisely the potent music/lyric/image combination necessary to unleash the imagination of the learner and promote proficiency in the foreign language.

In the realm of representing the arts and humanities in language learning and teaching, poetry and song have received considerable attention. Maley (1987), for example, suggests and elucidates no fewer than ten qualities of poetry and song that make them appropriate devices in language learning: Memorability, Rhythmicality, Performance/Reciteability, Ambiguity, Non-Triviality, Universality, Playfulness, Reactional Language, and Motivation/Interaction. Maley contends that these qualities support the retention of lyrics and verse once learned, even when communicative competence has diminished. Further, such qualities are particularly positive when they occur in the context of authentic language samples; that is, language created by and produced for native speakers of the same language. Songs fulfill this criterion of authenticity, both in linguistic and cultural dimensions.

Pragmatic Considerations of Video

As a medium for presenting a foreign language teaching text, video offers language instructors and students a highly-accessible and manipulable product. Linear videotape is easily obtained, inexpensive and readily adapted, modified and edited into a useable classroom tool. Even in its unmodified prerecorded form, the videotape format offers the instructor a variety of choices for presenting and manipulating filmed material in the course of instruction: even the most primitive videotape player allows the user to stop action, freeze frame, view in fast-forward or slow-motion, and add or remove the sound track in order to exploit the video material to its fullest advantage. The instructor or student can focus on specific points in the video, isolating paralinguistic information, such as gestures, proxemics, or other markers of body language.

In addition, through the use of editing equipment, much more sophisticated enhancements of the video text can be achieved. Of the wide array of post-production editing techniques possible, the one that has the greatest implications for language teaching is the addition of open captions, or original language subtitles, which often assist the student in comprehending the language of the segment. Several major studies over the past decade, such as Price (1983) and Garza (1991) strongly suggest a positive correlation between the addition of target-language captions to video materials and increased comprehension. If comprehension does, indeed, precede production in a foreign language, then captioning may serve as a valuable aid in bringing our students to the level of proficiency needed to understand and more fully appreciate authentic television broadcasts, motion pictures, documentaries—or even music videos!

As with any text for foreign language instruction, video materials must be carefully chosen to meet the needs and goals established for the course, especially in a proficiency or performance-based curriculum. Since not all material that appears in the video format is necessarily appropriate for classroom use, certain criteria have been generally agreed upon as essential for selecting "good" video segments (Lonergan 1984, Altman 1989). First, useful video must contain the linguistic material (lexical, syntactic, phonetic, functional, etc.) desired for instruction. Second, the video segment should be thematically inter-

esting and culturally relevant for the target audience. Third, the selected materials should be multi-layered; that is, they should be able to maintain student interest in the face of repeated close viewing. Fourth, in the ideal segment, the visual images are no less important than the accompanying spoken text, and the two depend on each other for complete comprehension of the text. Finally there remains the issue of length of the video segments for classroom use. Here, too, various foreign language researchers agree that approximately four minutes of video provides the optimal amount of layered information for processing at one time (Altman 1989, Lavery 1984).

In the proficiency-oriented foreign language classroom, many rock music videos fulfill virtually all of the above-mentioned criteria for use as text. The products of MTV (cable television's Music Television network, with 24-hour broadcasting of music videos and related features) may well be considered the international format and standard for all music videos produced. Clips are three to four minutes in length, which is ideal for video-based instruction. Many are saturated with evocative images thematically linked to the lyrics, while others—the so-called "concept videos"—present a truncated narrative and a cast of characters, telling one of the many stories contained within the lyrics. Though the correlation of images to lyrics may not be very high, the effect is to create precisely the environment needed to encourage repeated viewings (i.e., repeated exposures to the language and cultural material) and autonomous interaction of the student/class with the video.

Textual Considerations

While the lyrics of a typical video contain substantial lexical, grammatical, and functional material for classroom use, it is actually the visual text that overlays the lyrics with images and activates the learner's imagination. Once engaged, the imagination can provide unlimited contexts in which the student can manipulate the newly-acquired linguistic material. In this connection, the very malleable nature of video technology plays a most important role in making classroom treatment of these video segments interactive and directed towards student performance in the target language. The video can be stopped and reviewed to examine more closely individual moments and images encapsulated in the video—often in very quick succession—and allow the students, rather than the instructor, to discover much of the underlying visual text of the segment. To facilitate this more student-centered approach, it helps to leave the remote control in the hands of students, allowing them to dictate the selection of items and the order of their explication. Similarly, instead of the usual teacher-centered explanations of cultural elements, the students themselves are allowed to draw first on their own individual and collective prior knowledge about the world and the target culture to try to ascribe meaning and textual order to the video images.

To illustrate this potential engagement of the student's imagination in the context of a music video, consider the recent video released to accompany Sting's award-winning song "If I Ever Lose My Faith In You." The lyrics are an excellent example of the poetic, yet still quite functional, repetition that is typical of many contemporary rock videos:

> You could say I lost my faith in science and progress.
> You could say I lost my belief in the holy church.
> You could say I lost my sense of direction.
> You could say all of this and worse, but
> If I ever lose my faith in you,
> There'd be nothing left for me to do.
> (Sting, 1993)

On the surface, the lyrics might provide the EFL instructor with excellent material to present and practice modal constructions in English. To ignore the video modality of this clip, however, would be to sacrifice much of the power of this medium as an effective text for teaching and learning the target culture. In the video clip, the lyrics are sung over extraordinary images of authentic Arthurian and chivalric legends, Glastonbury Tor, King Richard III, and Saint Joan. These images invoke the literary and cultural icons from British history and literature, all recognizable on sight by most educated native speakers of

British English. It is such culturally authentic material that provides several types of production tasks for creating performance-based classroom interaction. First, since the prior texts involved in such video montages may not be known to the students learning the language, the original texts might be told, read, retold by the students, illustrated, or matched with the appropriate images in the music video. Second, since the connection between lyrics and video text may be thematic at best, students can be challenged to identify such relationships or to create their own links between the music lyrics and visual elements. This can generate lively and creative oral or written pieces. Third, using the original lyrics to inspire a class-produced video- or photo-montage can be a full-scale project for a class at any level of proficiency. Even for novice and intermediate level learners, the music without the lyrics may invoke particular images that students can assemble, produce or draw, and try to explicate in oral or written form.

Just as the Sting video text can be effectively exploited in an EFL classroom for British English, American rock video sources provide no less material. Exemplary of the text-rich concept videos from American artists is Madonna's "Like a Prayer," which combines simple but evocative lyrics with powerful and controversial visual images:

> Life is a mystery
> Everyone must stand alone
> I hear you call my name
> And it feels like home.
> When you call my name, it's like a little prayer;
> I'm down on my knees, I want to take you there;
> In the midnight hour, I can feel your power;
> Just like a prayer, you know I'll take you there.
> (Madonna and Leonard, 1989)

These seemingly innocuous romantic lyrics are layered over an explosive visual montage depicting a racially-provoked murder, a miscarriage of justice in an American courtroom, and an intermingling of an interracial love story and religious affirmation. Visual literary allusions are made to American literary classics such as *Elmer Gantry* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, requiring students to express and support opinions on complex social issues, all the while keeping the language material well-grounded in the relevant cultural setting. As Swaffar (1992) and Kramsch (1993) maintain, using literary texts with interactive communicative activities helps the students understand and acquire the shared meanings contained within literary works. With the teacher acting as native or near-native informant, the students are taught how to extract and exploit the cultural information often found in popular literature.

On Michael Jackson and Minimal Pairs

Songs, like poetry, are one of the most powerful combinations in helping the learner commit limited phrases and word combinations to memory, to be put into active service at a later time in communication. Rock music videos can also be most effective in teaching pronunciation and intonation. The success of basic introductory EFL course materials such as Graham's *Jazz Chants* (1978) attests to the appropriateness of the musical text in language learning. Songs often contain the elements of repetition, rhyme and rhythm that facilitate quick memorization and easy imitation of the original text material. It is no wonder, then, that in song a "foreign accent" pronunciation is much more easily masked or eliminated than in normal conversational speech. Recent rock groups such as Sweden's "Abba" and Norway's "A-ha" and the scores of Japanese Elvis impersonators are not unique in their mastery of *spoken* English after only singing and recording for several years from a written phonetic English transcription! Even native English-speaking musicians such as Eric Clapton and Billy Idol often choose to sing with native-like American phonetics, though their normal speaking voices produce pure British English sounds.

Music videos also have the advantage of being in the highly-manipulable video format, allowing for on-screen exploitation, such as captioning, as well as other task-specific procedures. The most relevant of these techniques for pronunciation is colorization, in which certain items in the on-screen captions appear

in different colors. This technique was developed and used in the acclaimed PBS series "ColorSounds" throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s as a means of teaching basic literacy skills to English-deficient school students and adults throughout the United States (Bell 1984). Selected contemporary music videos were captioned with particular sounds (e.g., /th/, word-final /r/, schwa, etc.) or grammatical items (eg., nouns, adjectives, plurals, etc.) colorized in the on-screen lyrics throughout. Students were encouraged to sing along with the video and note the occurrences of the particular item that was in color.

In 1985, some of these materials were adapted for inclusion in the video-based EFL package *In America*, aimed at teaching functional American English to speakers of Japanese (Dow 1985). For this project, music videos were selected to represent sounds which presented difficulty for the native speaker of Japanese. These sounds were colored in the captions to focus the learner's attention on their articulation in the song's lyrics. Sometimes these sounds would be contrasted with their allophones, such /r/ and /l/, with the two sounds appearing in different colors in the same song to emphasize each phoneme's distinctive articulation and pronunciation. Thus, the specialized captioning of these videos provided an excellent aid to presenting and teaching the phonetic material, while the actual performance of the music video created a perfect vehicle for production practice.

Foreign Language Music Video

The rock music format enjoys popularity both as English-language broadcast-quality videos and as locally-produced native-language music videos in countries all over the world. Spanish, French and German-speaking countries all tout MTV-like channels or programming, usually playing a mix of indigenous and imported videos. Just as the MTV videos can serve the EFL classroom, these foreign language rock videos can provide a wealth of memorable, functional language units contextualized by relevant, culturally-saturated visual images.

Materials development projects over the last three years in the Department of Slavic Languages at the University of Texas have provided valuable opportunities to observe students of Russian working with authentic Russian-language rock music videos selected from the Moscow television program "Muzykal'noe obozrenie" ("Musical Review") which has emerged in the post-Gorbachev Commonwealth of Independent States as the local version of MTV. Like its American counterpart (which began limited broadcasting in Russia in 1993, complete with a Russian-speaking video jockey), "Muzoboz," as it is called in Moscow, broadcasts primarily performance or "concert" video footage, while the pedagogically more useful "concept" video format is still in its nascent stages of development. Still, many quite acceptable music video texts for Russian language teaching have emerged over the past five years.

One such video is from the St. Petersburg-based group "Kino." The video is for the song "Videli noch'" ["We Saw the Night"] and, like any good rock music video text, has linguistically interesting lyrics combined with useful visuals. The lyrics alone provide considerable material for production activities in the Russian class:

My vysli iz doma kogda vo vsex oknax	We left home when in all the windows
Pogasli ogni odin za odnim.	The lights went out one by one.
My videli kak uezzaet poslednyj tramvaj.	We watched the last tram leave.
Ezdjat taksi no nam necem platit'	Taxis are out but we don't have money
I nam nezacem exat'.	And we have no reason to go.
My guljaem odni.	So we walk around alone.
Na nasem kasetnike koncilas' pljonka.	The tape on our player has ended.
Smotaj!	Rewind!
Est' sigarety, spicki i butylka vina	We've got cigarettes, matches and a bottle of wine
I ona pomozet nam zdat', pomozet poverit'	And it'll help us wait, it'll help us believe
Cto vse spjat i my zdes' vdojom.	That everyone's asleep and just we two are here.
Videli noc', guljali vsju noc' do utra.	We saw the night, we walked all night till dawn.

(Viktor Tsoy 1986)

These song lyrics provide excellent examples of verbal tense movement in colloquial narration from past to present to future activity. With a preponderance of palatalized consonants, the sounds in the video are well-suited for work on phonetics as well. But the video also allows the students to explore and begin to discover the Russian's world—in this case for university students, the world of their peers in St. Petersburg. Since many of our students may not get the opportunity to travel to Russia during their study, such brief video excursions into the culture of language being studied are crucial, both to inform and to motivate. By watching the video scenes of Petersburg's streets late at night, and how Russian youth try to find places and ways to be out with friends, our students come to understand more about the nature of the lives of the Russians, about the ways they are alienated in Russian society, and how that is like and unlike their own experience in the U.S. For many of our students, the mere fact that many Russian university students live with their parents all the way through and long after their schooling is new information and a cultural discovery. Our students speak about an immediate sense of identification with their Russian peers that comes from finally being able to see them in their native Russian environment. How the Russian students dress, how they talk, how they behave with one another all help our students find more relevance in their study of Russian language and culture.

Tom Garza (left) helps students discover the Russian culture and language through rock videos.

A Thousand Words

If the adage "A picture is worth a thousand words" has any validity to it, then the use of video materials as part of a performance-based curriculum for foreign language instruction seems to be a natural consequence of including the most useful texts to encourage and stimulate active interaction of our students in the target language. By extension, I would contend that the inclusion of music videos as the source text exponentially increases the utility and benefits of regular video materials by adding the equally evocative modalities of lyric poetry and music, creating one of the potentially richest three minutes of useable text to be brought into a classroom. With limited additional preparation time, rock music videos offer both teacher and student endless variations of situational, functional, and truly communicative activities for developing proficiency. Turn on MTV and give music videos another critical review. Perhaps something in them will excite your own imagination in language teaching and you'll find a video that suits you and your needs. Then, in the immortal words of David Essex, "Rock on!"

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Country Songs:
Music, Language, and Life

Judith Diamond (top) and Elizabeth Minicz are ESL consultants for the Adult Learning Resource Center in Des Plaines, Illinois, which provides services to ESL programs throughout the state. Ms. Minicz has a master's degree in Adult Education and has written several books including Holidays in the USA *(Scott Foresman, 1991). Ms. Diamond has a master's degree in English Linguistics and has also written a variety of books and articles, including a book on Laos for the "Enrichment of the World" series for Children's Press.*

by Judith Diamond and Elizabeth Minicz

I burned my hand.
I cut my face.
Heaven knows how long it's been
Since I've felt so out of place
Wondering if I'd fit in.
Garth Brooks "Learning to Live Again"

Garth Brooks sang on about the anxiety of a man going on his first blind date after years of marriage. My colleague burst into laughter. "Country songs," she snorted, inventing her own: "I got up this morning, I brushed my teeth." "Yes," I answered eagerly, "That is just the point."

Country songs are about real life—memories and reactions to real things that happen to everyone. It is for just this reason that they fit so well into an ESL class. They are pieces of America: language, culture, emotions, and biases. More than that, they are pieces of humanity mirroring feelings felt by human beings all over the globe. Garth Brooks' agonizing over whether he'll be accepted by a woman he's never seen is not too different from a young village girl's first arranged meeting with a potential husband, an exchange student's introduction to his host family, or a newly arrived immigrant's first day on the job in an American workplace.

Country songs are "walking and talking" songs, stories with a moral. Randy Travis sings about his grandfather in "He Walked on Water." Sawyer Brown sings of farmers losing their fields to hard times in "Cafe on the Corner." Waylon Jennings, Willlie Nelson, and Johnny Cash tell tales of adventurers in "The Highwaymen." The lyrics are full and are better read first and then heard. They bring experiences and voices other than the teacher's into the classroom. Country music is a window to American culture. Listen to Alabama's "Cheap Seats," a song of baseball mania in a "middle-class town in the Middle West."

When using any authentic material in the classroom, teachers need to be mindful that both top-down and bottom-up processing are taking place. Learners will be using their knowledge of the world and their knowledge of English to make sense of what they are presented. Prior experience, cultural background, and the content of the situation at hand will be combined with the learner's level of English proficiency.

There are a number of ways to prepare students for listening to a country song, or any song for that matter. Informal teacher talk and class discussion are time-honored techniques to make the content and language of the song accessible. Together, the teacher and class question new vocabulary and talk about the situations described. They may examine pictures, look at or make lists of information, preview a chart, predict or speculate about the content of the song, read teacher-made questions or construct their own to be answered while listening.

As you listen to the song yourself, logical ways to introduce it to your students will occur to you. A few weeks ago, we heard Reba McIntyre's new song, "Why Haven't I Heard From You?" while we were driving to work. We started thinking about ways to use the song with learners even before we heard the whole song. In the song, Reba gives a short story of the telephone, reviews a number of telephone services such as call-waiting and call-forwarding, then cites a number of natural disasters, all the time asking the question, "Why haven't I heard from you?" We might begin our song lesson by asking our students such questions as, "Why don't you return phone calls?" or "Who are some people you don't want to speak to on the phone?" Or we could bring in some copies of our phone bills with examples of various phone

services and the related charges. Students could interview partners about the phone services they have or would like to have. Some teachers report that because telephone installation charges are so high, their students use less costly beepers or pagers in lieu of phones.

Now that we've prepared students to listen to the song, the next step is naturally to listen. Again the options are many. Learners can complete forms or charts, circle or check key-words or phrases they hear, put pictures or words in order, fill-in blanks, answer multiple choice or true/false questions and so on. Even a beginning class can enjoy the music, catch a bit of grammar and a handful of vocabulary. There are many easy songs with simple lyrics. Charlie Rich echoes over and over his love for "The Most Beautiful Girl" and Alabama laughs at America's passion for speed in "I'm in a Hurry" with a simple, catchy chorus. Try tying a song together with pictures. In "Look Heart No Hands," Randy Travis sings about taking chances. "No chains, no strings, no fences, no walls, no nets, no hands." The students listen for their word and hold up a picture when they hear it. Of course, if the song is singable—sing it!

After listening to the song as many times as it takes in order to complete the while-listening tasks, the learners are ready for one or more post-listening activities. One obvious activity for what we call "Reba's telephone song" is to put students in groups and ask them to brainstorm a list of reasons why Reba hasn't heard from the person she is singing to and share their lists with the rest of the class. Beginners may simply have to decide who Reba is singing to and if she will hear from this person again. We might also ask the students to role-play a telephone conversation between Reba and the mystery person or write a letter to Reba explaining why she hasn't heard from me.

Stepping into America

On a more holistic level, students' response to the songs takes the form of stepping into American culture while bringing their own experiences and feelings. The responses can be a discussion or even a formal debate. Michael Martin Murphy and his son Ryan puzzle over women in "Talking to the Wrong Man." What do women want anyway? John Anderson mourns the destruction of the environment in "Seminole Wind." Is modernization and development necessary or should the "old ways" be maintained? The teacher may post sheets of chart paper around the room and ask students to respond to questions while reading the responses of others. Or, in another version of the same thing, the text and song can be entered into a computer with a CD-ROM (or in less technically equipped classroom, a typed copy and a tape recorder). Songs also can be compared. Alabama's "Pass It On Down" which asks the older generation to preserve the world for its children can be juxtaposed with "Seminole Wind." Written compositions extend from comment and comparison to criticism and expressions of related ideas.

A word of caution: If ways to use the song in your classroom do not automatically come to mind while you are listening to it, don't use it!

Country music is valuable for more than culture and vocabulary. It is rich in idioms. This is language, away from the textbook, as it is spoken and heard. No listing of ways to say good-bye is as memorable as George Strait's "Easy Come, Easy Go."

> Good-bye,
> Farewell,
> So long,
> Vaya con dios,
> Good luck,
> Wish you well,
> Take it slow,
> Easy come, girl, easy go.

A piece of a song to illustrate a piece of grammar gives the student and teacher grammar in context. Randy Travis uses the comparative structure as he contrasts a city singer's and country boy's list of the depths of love.

(CITY SINGER)
My love is
Deeper than the oceans,
Higher than the stars

(A COUNTRY LOVER)
...My love is deeper than the holler,
Stronger than the river,
Higher than the pine trees
Growing tall upon the hill.

Liz Minicz (left) and Judith Diamond find country music both a metaphor and a method.

How would students decribe their feelings using the mood and world that they come from? Or take Diamond Rio promising and procrastinating in "A Week or Two":

> In a week or two I would have been ready;
> I would have known what to say.

What is it that the class (and their teacher) "would have done" and now regrets not doing?

The grammar used in country music is not always that of English teachers. Country songs seldom use an "am not" where an "ain't" could fit and double negatives are popular. But the language of the songs is the language of the streets. It is what our students hear when they leave class and go home. We may not want them to use all of it, but they'd better understand it.

It is important to be able to process language by responding to thought groups rather than piecing together individual words. An enjoyable way to practice quick recognition and response is through dialogues. Some country songs are set in this format. George Strait tries out his line on a good-looking girl in "The Chair." He asks, waits for her answer, and then tries again. A class can write her half of the dialogue and then sing it in the pauses between George's questions. In other songs, students can write a new verse or even a whole new song on the same theme.

Country music is especially well suited to practicing pronunciation. It is true that, in some cases, the farther south of the Mason-Dixon line that you live, the more precise the pronunciation practice will be. However, many singers such as the Judds, Garth Brooks, George Strait, and Doug Supernall have only a mild Southern accent. Ignoring Southern twang [nasalization], all songs imitate natural stress and intonation. Try speaking a song as you listen to it. You will find the pattern of your voice matches the melody. A question would not sound like a question in song or speech if it did not have the appropriate intonation pattern. Songs emphasize word stress by beat and volume. Pitch follows intonation. When a change of intonation and stress occur together, as in a question, it is emphasized by note length.

Students should listen for patterns first. The teacher may point out stress and ask students to identify stressed words. A list of these words often is a list of the main ideas of the song. Listening a second time, the students might try to clap the stresses. They can sing along with the singer, exaggerating his or her intonations. Have the class then speak as the singer sings. Finally, let them say the song into the tape recorder and listen again comparing their pronunciation to the singer's. The most difficult part of this activity is transferring intonation from song to speech. Students feel free to mimic American music as anyone visiting a foreign country these days knows, but they are less comfortable speaking with an American accent. Since many country songs are spoken stories, they translate into talk more easily than other American music.

In fact, that brings to mind some other factors to consider when selecting songs to use for language learning. The more of the criteria listed below that song meets, the easier it will be to use in an ESL curriculum.

- Is the song singable (whole or parts)?
- Does the instrumental music overpower the singer?
- Are the words intelligible?
- Is the accent comprehensible?
- Do the lyrics use natural speech?
- Does repetition of key-words or phrases add to the meaning or singability?

- Is the vocabulary too idiomatic or colloquial, or is it archaic, obscene, or nonsensical?
- Is the topic something students can relate to?

A melody, a phrase from a song sticks to the brain. Think back to your foreign language classes in school. French students, may not remember much else, but they usually still can sing the opening lines of the Marseillaise. Music brings language alive. Songs provide chunks of language complete with shadings of meaning and emotion. They give context to grammar and syntax and purpose to speech. Songs release tension and allow students to enjoyably hear and repeat language again and again.

Now just think what you could do with country music videos!

Appendix

Songs to Get Started With

Musicians	*Songs*
Alabama	"Cheap Seats"
	"I'm in a Hurry"
	"Pass It on Down"
	"48 Hour Week"
John Anderson	"Seminole Wind"
Garth Brooks	"Learning to Live Again"
	"The River"
Sawyer Brown	"Cafe Down at the Corner"
Johnny Cash	"The Highwayman"
Mark Chestnut	"It Sure Is Monday"
Allan Jackson	"Mercury Blues"
Diamond Rio	"In a Week or Two"
Larry Gatlin	"All the Gold in California"
Tom T. Hall	"I Love"
The Judds	"I Know Where I Am Going"
	"Love Can Build a Bridge"
Kathy Mattea	"Come From the Heart"
	"Eighteen-Wheeler"
Reba McIntyre	"Why Haven't I Heard From You"
John Michael Montgomery	"Life's a Dance"
Anne Murray	"A Little Good News"
George Strait	"Easy Come, Easy Go"
	"The Chair"
Don Williams	"Lord, I Hope This Day Is Good"

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Fear of Poetry's Multicultural Cure

A review of A Chorus of Cultures: Developing Literacy through Multicultural Poetry *by Alma Flor Ada, Violet J. Harris, and Lee Bennett Hopkins (Carmel, CA: Hampton-Brown, 1933. Book, $59.95; Posters, $99.95; 4 Tapes $45. Complete set $185).*

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by Susan Rusciano Rupp

This anthology is the central component in a program designed to awaken young students (presumably K-6 or K-8) to the joy of poetry in a multicultural context on a daily basis. The book's calendar format addresses holidays and seasonal issues across many cultures, with more personal themes growing out of these in a surprisingly organic fashion. Male and female poets from many culturess represented within the spectrum of American culture are included, and neither student poets nor traditionally anthologized poets have been ignored. The cultural and background information imparted is concisely and sensitively written with an eye towards the development of multicultural awareness, love of language, and individual self-esteem.

What is striking about the program is its organization and ease of implementation. The poetry is accompanied by whole-language instructional activities (with ready-made activity sheets), which either focus primarily on literacy skills or on other subjects across the curriculum. Icons indicate which poems are written by young poets, which poems are represented in the other components of the program, and which activities have a multicultural focus. Indexes cross-reference this information, in addition to the traditional author, title, theme, first-line, and genre indexes.

There is also an index of poems appropriate for ESL instruction indicating which poems would work best for students at pre-production, early production, speech emergence, and intermediate fluency levels of language proficiency. In fact, over one hundred poems are included in this index, rendering the anthology particularly useful for ESL teachers. As the authors state, "*A Chorus of Cultures* celebrates the contributions students acquiring English make to the classroom, while recognizing the unique needs these students have."

The activities also mention whether they would be appropriate for students acquiring English or how they might be modified to do so. For example, the selection for March 12th, "Tommy" by Gwendolyn Brooks, is presented with a science activity on creating a classroom bean sprout garden. Below the description of the activity's equipment and procedures is a separate paragraph on "Content-Area ESL," which describes an illustrated word bank activity (utilizing gardening terms) to be implemented with the initial activity.

While many classroom poetry anthologies now present works by men and women from a variety of cultures (thanks to canon revisionists), multiculturalism is only addressed in the selection process. Hence, the revised canon's multicultural focus is on the external component of the reading experience—in the text and not in the reader. The selections and activities in *A Chorus of Cultures* stress multiculturalism not only in the works presented but also in our students.

As Archibald MacLeish wrote, "A poem should not mean / but be." In *A Chorus of Cultures* poetry is, in a sense, let be in that the standard : "What does Langston Hughes' 'Dreams' tell us about life without dreams? Give an example of metaphor used in the poem" is nowhere to be found. The poetry is there to be experienced, enjoyed, shared, sung (complete with sheet music), talked about, depicted, chanted, translated, and imitated—not analyzed. Exposure to poetry through this program will not only aid students in developing literacy skills and multicultural awareness, it may actually work as a vaccine against the fear of poetry we see in so many secondary students whose only joy in a poetry unit is that the works are usually brief enough to be quickly skimmed and discarded.

This is an effective program that allows poetry a central place in our classrooms. The music of poetry from a myriad of cultures flows from this book to our students, inspiring them to "add [their] voices to the chorus." The varied selections and creative activities in this anthology might make poets out of all of us.

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G – Graduate School: TESL
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J – Private Language School
K – Intensive Language Program
L – Arts
M– Sciences
N – Military
O – Special Purposes
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Comments on the First Issue
of The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning

"I ordered, I read, I reordered! What a perfect little collection—good size, excellent incorporation of art and photographs, and exciting ideas presented well. Good luck with this 'imaginative' endeavour."

NATALIE GAST
Customized Language Skills Training
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"What a wealth of ideas and techniques!"

ADELE G. HANSEN
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"There's a definite need for this journal in the field of Second Language Learning. I am also pleased the Journal of the Imagination was visually so beautiful and sparked my imagination! Thanks!"

DR. MARY ANN CHRISTISON
Snow College
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"I have stolen five teaching excercises from this publication. What's not to like? Great idea. Keep going."

DR. DONNA FULKERSON
St. Francis College
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"My curiosity led me to read this *Journal* from cover to cover; seriously, when was the last time you did that with a professional journal? Be honest!"

Review in ELSIE SPEAKS
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Minneapolis, Minnesota

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LIZ BRUNKOW
Portland Community College
Portland, Oregon

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Ujjal Singh Bahri, Editor
Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics
New Delhi, India

"As a K-2 ESL teacher, I have found the lessons in which I use art, crafts and/or drama to be the most successful. The Journal fills a need for ideas in my classroom. I look forward to the 1994 issue."

PAT PARKER
Livingston Primary School
Livingston, Texas

"I am delighted to get the first issue of the *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*...These days, the more our lives are being mechanized by computers, word-processors and the like, the more we need truly human activities including imagination and creativity. Consequently, fostering humanity is an important component in language education. I expect very much from future issues of your review."

MARIKO HOLLAND
Nagoya Holy Spirit Junior College
Nagoya, Japan

"I teach foreign students who come to this country for intensive TOEFL preparation. They are usually quite well-prepared in their own countries in grammar, but lack communicative skills. The fact that they are highly goal-oriented, paying a high tuition, and used to a very teacher-centered classroom makes it difficult to get them to "lighten up" and allow their imaginations free reign. I was delighted to receive your new (and excellent) publication and look forward to future issues. I would welcome comments from anyone else facing the task of convincing college level students that they can both have fun and learn!"

LESLEY WOODWARD
Utica College of Syracuse University
Utica, New York

"A wonderful tool to lead teachers toward a true communicative approach. Thank you!"

MARJORIE FRIEDMAN
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"I really enjoyed reading the *Journal*...Most importantly though was that this issue helped me to explain to my students, their parents and other professionals about why using "creative" activities is important in the classroom. I'm looking forward to the next issue."

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"I came across the first issue of your *Journal* at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Library in Toronto. Needless to say, I was excited...Keep up the excellent work!"

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"...I strongly see a need for more frequent publications of your *Journal*, to not only inform educators about the role of the imagination in language acquisition, but also to legitimize its use and advocate for more support and funding for the arts in language programs."

RHONDA NAIDICH
New York, New York

"In Cambridge, one summer evening, Carolyn Grahm told me the 'Golden Balls' story. She said she sees life as being someplace where you go around throwing golden balls. She said that somehow all those golden balls come back to you. *JILL* is a golden ball...I thank you for allowing me to be a part of this."

JOHN DUMICICH
The American Language Institute
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The 1995 Journal will again list the names and addresses of persons who are interested in corresponding about the imagination in language learning. If you would like to have your name appear, please indicate the categories of interest below, and return this with your subscription form.

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The Journal Of The Imagination In Language Learning

Dear Colleague,

It is very important that we know of your reactions to this *Journal* as well as to the ideas that generated it—whether those reactions are positive, negative, or simply too faint to be discerned. Feel free to use the lines below or separate pages for a very brief or a very lengthy evaluation or comment. If you prefer that your remarks not be considered for publication, please so indicate.

Of particular interest in the third issue (1995) will be creative writing and storytelling in the language classroom. Although the former might seem active and the latter, passive, that is certainly not the case. Both stir the imagination in different parts of a grand cycle. Articles exploring these and any other topics related to the imagination will be gratefully received and carefully read. Our somewhat flexible deadline is April 1, 1995. Persons interested in writing an article or conducting an interview, however, should contact us immediately by letter, telephone (201-200-3087) of FAX (201-200-3238, or 201-200-2072). It's a good chance to be heard since some 5,000 copies of the *Journal* are printed and distributed annually in the USA and internationally.

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